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OF
SAMUEL JOHNSON

LITERARY CLUB EDITION FROM TYPE

IN SIXTEEN VOLUMES

VOLUME VI

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Jos. Banks

THE IDLER; POEMS

By SAMUEL JOHNSON

PAFRAETS BOOK COMPANY
TROY NEW YORK

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THE IDLER

No. 77. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1759

EASY poetry is universally admired; but I know not whether any rule has yet been fixed, by which it may be decided when poetry can be properly called easy. Horace has told us, that it is such as "every reader hopes to equal, but after long labour finds unattainable." This is a very loose description, in which only the effect is noted; the qualities which produce this effect remain to be investigated.

Easy poetry is that in which natural thoughts are expressed without violence to the language. The discriminating character of ease consists principally in the diction; for all true poetry requires that the sentiments be natural. Language suffers violence by harsh or by daring figures, by transposition, by unusual acceptations of words, and by any licence, which would be avoided by a writer of prose. Where any artifice appears in the construction of the verse, that verse is no longer easy. Any epithet which can be ejected without diminution of the sense, any curious iteration of the same word, and all unusual, though not ungrammatical structure of speech, destroy the grace of easy poetry.

The first lines of Pope's Iliad afford examples of many licences which an easy writer must decline:

> Achilles' *wrath*, to Greece the *direful spring*
> Of woes unnumber'd, *heav'nly* Goddess sing;
> The wrath which *hurl'd* to Pluto's *gloomy reign*
> The souls of *mighty* chiefs untimely slain.

In the first couplet the language is distorted by inversions, clogged with superfluities, and clouded

by a harsh metaphor; and in the second there are two words used in an uncommon sense, and two epithets inserted only to lengthen the line; all these practices may in a long work easily be pardoned, but they always produce some degree of obscurity and ruggedness.

Easy poetry has been so long excluded by ambition of ornament, and luxuriance of imagery, that its nature seems now to be forgotten. Affectation, however opposite to ease, is sometimes mistaken for it; and those who aspire to gentle elegance, collect female phrases and fashionable barbarisms, and imagine that style to be easy which custom has made familiar. Such was the idea of the poet who wrote the following verses to a *countess cutting paper:*

Pallas grew *vap'rish once and odd,*
  She would not *do the least right thing*
Either for Goddess or for God,
  Nor work, nor play, nor paint, nor sing.

Jove frown'd, and "Use (he cried) those eyes
  So skilful, and those hands so taper;
Do something exquisite and wise"—
  She bow'd, obey'd him, and cut paper.

This vexing him who gave her birth,
  Thought by all Heaven a *burning shame,*
What does she next, but bids on earth
  Her Burlington do just the same?

Pallas, you give yourself *strange airs;*
  But sure you'll find it hard to spoil
The sense and taste of one that bears
  The name of Saville and of Boyle.

Alas! one bad example shown,
  How quickly all the sex pursue!
See, madam! see the arts o'erthrown
  Between John Overton and *you.*

It is the prerogative of easy poetry to be understood as long as the language lasts; but modes of speech, which owe their prevalence only to modish folly, or to the eminence of those that use them, die away with their inventors, and their meaning, in a few years, is no longer known.

Easy poetry is commonly sought in petty compositions upon minute subjects; but ease, though it excludes pomp, will admit greatness. Many lines in Cato's soliloquy are at once easy and sublime:

> 'Tis the Divinity that stirs within us;
> 'Tis Heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
> And intimates eternity to man.
> ——— If there's a Power above us,
> And that there is all Nature cries aloud
> Through all her works, he must delight in virtue,
> And that which he delights in must be happy.

Nor is ease more contrary to wit than to sublimity; the celebrated stanza of Cowley, on a lady elaborately dressed, loses nothing of its freedom by the spirit of the sentiment:

> Th' adorning thee with so much art
> Is but a barb'rous skill;
> 'Tis like the pois'ning of a dart,
> Too apt before to kill.

Cowley seems to have possessed the power of writing easily beyond any other of our poets; yet his pursuit of remote thought led him often into harshness of expression. Waller often attempted, but seldom attained it; for he is too frequently driven into transpositions. The poets, from the time of Dryden, have gradually advanced in embellishment, and consequently departed from simplicity and ease.

To require from any author many pieces of easy poetry, would be indeed to oppress him with too hard a task. It is less difficult to write a volume of lines swelled with epithets, brightened by figures, and stiffened by transpositions, than to produce a few couplets graced only by naked elegance and simple purity, which require so much care and skill, that I doubt whether any of our authors have yet been able, for twenty lines together, nicely to observe the true definition of easy poetry.

No. 78. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1759

I HAVE passed the summer in one of those places to which a mineral spring gives the idle and luxurious an annual reason for resorting, whenever they fancy themselves offended by the heat of London. What is the true motive of this periodical assembly, I have never yet been able to discover. The greater part of the visitants neither feel diseases nor fear them. What pleasure can be expected more than the variety of the journey, I know not, for the numbers are too great for privacy, and too small for diversion. As each is known to be a spy upon the rest, they all live in continual restraint; and having but a narrow range for censure, they gratify its cravings by preying on one another.

But every condition has some advantages. In this confinement, a smaller circle affords opportunities for more exact observation. The glass that magnifies its object contracts the sight to a point; and the

mind must be fixed upon a single character to remark its minute peculiarities. The quality or habit which passes unobserved in the tumult of successive multitudes, becomes conspicuous when it is offered to the notice day after day; and, perhaps, I have, without any distinct notice, seen thousands like my late companions; for when the scene can be varied at pleasure, a slight disgust turns us aside before a deep impression can be made upon the mind.

There was a select set, supposed to be distinguished by superiority of intellects, who always passed the evening together. To be admitted to their conversation was the highest honour of the place; many youths aspired to distinction, by pretending to occasional invitations; and the ladies were often wishing to be men, that they might partake the pleasures of learned society.

I know not whether by merit or destiny, I was, soon after my arrival, admitted to this envied party, which I frequented till I had learned the art by which each endeavoured to support his character.

Tom Steady was a vehement assertor of uncontroverted truth; and by keeping himself out of the reach of contradiction had acquired all the confidence which the consciousness of irresistible abilities could have given. I was once mentioning a man of eminence, and, after having recounted his virtues, endeavoured to represent him fully, by mentioning his faults. "Sir," said Mr. Steady, "that he has faults I can easily believe, for who is without them? No man, Sir, is now alive, among the innumerable mul-

titudes that swarm upon the earth, however wise, or however good, who has not, in some degree, his failings and his faults. If there be any man faultless, bring him forth into publick view, show him openly, and let him be known; but I will venture to affirm, and, till the contrary be plainly shown, shall always maintain, that no such man is to be found. Tell not me, Sir, of impeccability and perfection; such talk is for those that are strangers in the world: I have seen several nations, and conversed with all ranks of people; I have known the great and the mean, the learned and the ignorant, the old and the young, the clerical and the lay; but I have never found a man without a fault; and I suppose shall die in the opinion, that to be human is to be frail."

To all this nothing could be opposed. I listened with a hanging head; Mr. Steady looked round on the hearers with triumph, and saw every eye congratulating his victory; he departed, and spent the next morning in following those who retired from the company, and telling them, with injunctions of secrecy, how poor Spritely began to take liberties with men wiser than himself; but that he suppressed him by a decisive argument, which put him totally to silence.

Dick Snug is a man of sly remark and pithy sententiousness: he never immerges himself in the stream of conversation, but lies to catch his companions in the eddy: he is often very successful in breaking narratives and confounding eloquence. A gentleman, giving the history of one of his acquaint-

ance, made mention of a lady that had many lovers: "Then," said Dick, "she was either handsome or rich." This observation being well received, Dick watched the progress of the tale; and, hearing of a man lost in a shipwreck, remarked, that "no man was ever drowned upon dry land."

Will Startle is a man of exquisite sensibility, whose delicacy of frame and quickness of discernment subject him to impressions from the slightest causes; and who, therefore, passes his life between rapture and horrour, in quiverings of delight, or convulsions of disgust. His emotions are too violent for many words; his thoughts are always discovered by exclamations. *Vile*, *odious*, *horrid*, *detestable*, and, *sweet*, *charming*, *delightful*, *astonishing*, compose almost his whole vocabulary, which he utters with various contortions and gesticulations, not easily related or described.

Jack Solid is a man of much reading, who utters nothing but quotations; but having been, I suppose, too confident of his memory, he has for some time neglected his books, and his stock grows every day more scanty. Mr. Solid has found an opportunity every night to repeat, from Hudibras,

> Doubtless the pleasure is as great
> Of being cheated, as to cheat;

and from Waller,

> Poets lose half the praise they would have got,
> Were it but known what they discreetly blot.

Dick Misty is a man of deep research, and forcible

penetration. Others are content with superficial appearances; but Dick holds, that there is no effect without a cause, and values himself upon his power of explaining the difficult and displaying the abstruse. Upon a dispute among us, which of two young strangers was more beautiful, "You," says Mr. Misty, turning to me, "like Amaranthia better than Chloris. I do not wonder at the preference, for the cause is evident: there is in man a perception of harmony, and a sensibility of perfection, which touches the finer fibres of the mental texture; and before reason can descend from her throne, to pass her sentence upon the things compared, drives us towards the object proportioned to our faculties, by an impulse gentle, yet irresistible; for the harmonick system of the Universe, and the reciprocal magnetism of similar natures, are always operating towards conformity and union; nor can the powers of the soul cease from agitation, till they find something on which they can repose." To this nothing was opposed; and Amaranthia was acknowledged to excel Chloris.

Of the rest you may expect an account from,
Sir, yours, ROBIN SPRITELY.

No. 79. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1759

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

YOUR acceptance of a former letter on painting gives me encouragement to offer a few more sketches on the same subject.

Amongst the painters, and the writers on painting, there is one maxim universally admitted and continually inculcated. *Imitate nature* is the invariable rule; but I know none who have explained in what manner this rule is to be understood; the consequence of which is, that every one takes it in the most obvious sense, that objects are represented naturally when they have such relief that they seem real. It may appear strange, perhaps, to hear this sense of the rule disputed; but it must be considered, that, if the excellency of a painter consisted only in this kind of imitation, painting must lose its rank, and be no longer considered as a liberal art, and sister to poetry, this imitation being merely mechanical, in which the slowest intellect is always sure to succeed best: for the painter of genius cannot stoop to drudgery, in which the understanding has no part; and what pretence has the art to claim kindred with poetry, but by its powers over the imagination? To this power the painter of genius directs his aim; in this sense he studies nature, and often arrives at his end, even by being unnatural in the confined sense of the word.

The grand style of painting requires this minute attention to be carefully avoided, and must be kept as separate from it as the style of poetry from that of history. Poetical ornaments destroy that air of truth and plainness which ought to characterize history; but the very being of poetry consists in departing from this plain narration, and adopting every ornament that will warm the imagination. To de-

sire to see the excellencies of each style united, to mingle the Dutch with the Italian school, is to join contrarieties which cannot subsist together, and which destroy the efficacy of each other. The Italian attends only to the invariable, the great and general ideas which are fixed and inherent in universal nature; the Dutch, on the contrary, to literal truth and a minute exactness in the detail, as I may say, of nature modified by accident. The attention to these petty peculiarities is the very cause of this naturalness so much admired in the Dutch pictures, which, if we suppose it to be a beauty, is certainly of a lower order, which ought to give place to a beauty of a superior kind, since one cannot be obtained but by departing from the other.

If my opinion was asked concerning the works of Michael Angelo, whether they would receive any advantage from possessing this mechanical merit, I should not scruple to say, they would not only receive no advantage, but would lose, in a great measure, the effect which they now have on every mind susceptible of great and noble ideas. His works may be said to be all genius and soul; and why should they be loaded with heavy matter, which can only counteract his purpose by retarding the progress of the imagination?

If this opinion should be thought one of the wild extravagancies of enthusiasm, I shall only say, that those who censure it are not conversant in the works of the great masters. It is very difficult to determine the exact degree of enthusiasm that the arts of

painting and poetry may admit. There may, perhaps, be too great an indulgence, as well as too great a restraint of imagination; and if the one produces incoherent monsters, the other produces what is full as bad, lifeless insipidity. An intimate knowledge of the passions, and good sense, but not common sense, must at last determine its limits. It has been thought, and I believe with reason, that Michael Angelo sometimes trangressed those limits; and I think I have seen figures of him of which it was very difficult to determine whether they were in the highest degree sublime or extremely ridiculous. Such faults may be said to be the ebullitions of genius; but at least he had this merit, that he never was insipid, and whatever passion his works may excite, they will always escape contempt.

What I have had under consideration is the sublimest style, particularly that of Michael Angelo, the Homer of painting. Other kinds may admit of this naturalness, which of the lowest kind is the chief merit; but in painting, as in poetry, the highest style has the least of common nature.

One may very safely recommend a little more enthusiasm to the modern painters; too much is certainly not the vice of the present age. The Italians seem to have been continually declining, in this respect, from the time of Michael Angelo to that of Carlo Maratti, and from thence to the very bathos of insipidity to which they are now sunk; so that there is no need of remarking, that, where I mentioned the Italian painters in opposition to the

Dutch, I mean not the moderns, but the heads of the old Roman and Bolognian schools; nor did I mean to include in my idea of an Italian painter, the Venetian school, which may be said to be the Dutch part of the Italian genius. I have only to add a word of advice to the painters, that, however excellent they may be in painting naturally, they would not flatter themselves very much upon it, and to the connoisseurs, that when they see a cat or fiddle painted so finely, that, as the phrase is, "it looks as if you could take it up," they would not for that reason immediately compare the painter to Raffaelle and Michael Angelo[a].

No. 80. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1759

THAT every day has its pains and sorrows is universally experienced, and almost universally confessed; but let us not attend only to mournful truths; if we look impartially about us, we shall find that every day has likewise its pleasures and its joys.

The time is now come when the town is again beginning to be full, and the rusticated beauty sees an end of her banishment. Those whom the tyranny of fashion had condemned to pass the summer among shades and brooks, are now preparing to return to plays, balls and assemblies, with health restored by retirement, and spirits kindled by expectation.

Many a mind, which has languished some months without emotion or desire, now feels a sudden reno-

[a] By Sir Joshua Reynolds.

vation of its faculties. It was long ago observed by Pythagoras, that ability and necessity dwell near each other. She that wandered in the garden without sense of its fragrance, and lay day after day stretched upon a couch behind a green curtain, unwilling to wake, and unable to sleep, now summons her thoughts to consider which of her last year's clothes shall be seen again, and to anticipate the raptures of a new suit; the day and the night are now filled with occupation; the laces, which were too fine to be worn among rusticks, are taken from the boxes and reviewed; and the eye is no sooner closed after its labours, than whole shops of silk busy the fancy.

But happiness is nothing, if it is not known, and very little, if it is not envied. Before the day of departure a week is always appropriated to the payment and reception of ceremonial visits, at which nothing can be mentioned but the delights of London. The lady who is hastening to the scene of action flutters her wings, displays her prospects of felicity, tells how she grudges every moment of delay, and, in the presence of those whom she knows condemned to stay at home, is sure to wonder by what arts life can be made supportable through a winter in the country, and to tell how often, amidst the ecstasies of an opera, she shall pity those friends whom she has left behind. Her hope of giving pain is seldom disappointed; the affected indifference of one, the faint congratulations of another, the wishes of some openly confessed, and the silent dejection of the rest, all exalt her opinion of her own superiority.

But, however we may labour for our own deception, truth, though unwelcome, will sometimes intrude upon the mind. They who have already enjoyed the crowds and noise of the great city, know that their desire to return is little more than the restlessness of a vacant mind, that they are not so much led by hope as driven by disgust, and wish rather to leave the country than to see the town. There is commonly in every coach a passenger enwrapped in silent expectation, whose joy is more sincere, and whose hopes are more exalted. The virgin whom the last summer released from her governess, and who is now going between her mother and her aunt to try the fortune of her wit and beauty, suspects no fallacy in the gay representation. She believes herself passing into another world, and images London as an elysian region, where every hour has its proper pleasure, where nothing is seen but the blaze of wealth, and nothing heard but merriment and flattery; where the morning always rises on a show, and the evening closes on a ball; where the eyes are used only to sparkle, and the feet only to dance.

Her aunt and her mother amuse themselves on the road, with telling her of dangers to be dreaded, and cautions to be observed. She hears them as they heard their predecessors, with incredulity or contempt. She sees that they have ventured and escaped; and one of the pleasures which she promises herself is to detect their falsehoods, and be freed from their admonitions.

We are inclined to believe those whom we do not

know, because they have never deceived us. The fair adventurer may, perhaps, listen to the Idler, whom she cannot suspect of rivalry or malice; yet he scarcely expects to be credited when he tells her, that her expectations will likewise end in disappointment.

The uniform necessities of human nature produce, in a great measure, uniformity of life, and for part of the day make one place like another; to dress and to undress, to eat and to sleep, are the same in London as in the country. The supernumerary hours have, indeed, a great variety both of pleasure and of pain. The stranger, gazed on by multitudes at her first appearance in the Park, is, perhaps at the highest summit of female happiness; but how great is the anguish when the novelty of another face draws her worshippers away! The heart may leap for a time under a fine gown; but the sight of a gown yet finer puts an end to rapture. In the first row at an opera, two hours may be happily passed in listening to the musick on the stage, and watching the glances of the company; but how will the night end in despondency when she, that imagined herself the sovereign of the place, sees lords contending to lead Iris to her chair! There is little pleasure in conversation, to her whose wit is regarded but in the second place; and who can dance with ease or spirit that sees Amaryllis led out before her? She that fancied nothing but a succession of pleasures, will find herself engaged without design in numberless competitions, and mortified, without provocation, with numberless afflictions.

But I do not mean to extinguish that ardour which I wish to moderate, or to discourage those whom I am endeavouring to restrain. To know the world is necessary, since we were born for the help of one another; and to know it early is convenient, if it be only that we may learn early to despise it. She that brings to London a mind well prepared for improvement, though she misses her hope of uninterrupted happiness, will gain in return an opportunity of adding knowledge to vivacity, and enlarging innocence to virtue.

No. 81. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1759

AS the English army was passing towards Quebec along a soft savanna between a mountain and a lake, one of the petty chiefs of the inland regions stood upon a rock surrounded by his clan, and from behind the shelter of the bushes contemplated the art and regularity of European war. It was evening, the tents were pitched: he observed the security with which the troops rested in the night, and the order with which the march was renewed in the morning. He continued to pursue them with his eye till they could be seen no longer, and then stood for some time silent and pensive.

Then turning to his followers, "My children," said he, "I have often heard from men hoary with long life, that there was a time when our ancestors were absolute lords of the woods, the meadows and the lakes, wherever the eye can reach or the foot can pass. They fished and hunted, feasted and danced,

and when they were weary lay down under the first thicket, without danger and without fear. They changed their habitations, as the seasons required, convenience prompted, or curiosity allured them; and sometimes gathered the fruits of the mountain, and sometimes sported in canoes along the coast.

"Many years and ages are supposed to have been thus passed in plenty and security; when, at last, a new race of men entered our country from the great ocean. They inclosed themselves in habitations of stone, which our ancestors could neither enter by violence, nor destroy by fire. They issued from those fastnesses, sometimes covered, like the armadillo, with shells, from which the lance rebounded on the striker, and sometimes carried by mighty beasts which had never been seen in our vales or forests, of such strength and swiftness, that flight and opposition were vain alike. Those invaders ranged over the continent slaughtering, in their rage, those that resisted, and those that submitted, in their mirth. Of those that remained, some were buried in caverns, and condemned to dig metals for their masters; some were employed in tilling the ground, of which foreign tyrants devour the produce; and, when the sword and the mines have destroyed the natives, they supply their place by human beings of another colour, brought from some distant country to perish here under toil and torture.

"Some there are who boast their humanity, and content themselves to seize our chases and fisheries, who drive us from every tract of ground where fer-

tility and pleasantness invite them to settle, and make no war upon us except when we intrude upon our own lands.

"Others pretend to have purchased a right of residence and tyranny; but surely the insolence of such bargains is more offensive than the avowed and open dominion of force. What reward can induce the possessour of a country to admit a stranger more powerful than himself? Fraud or terrour must operate in such contracts; either they promised protection which they never have afforded, or instruction which they never imparted. We hoped to be secured by their favour from some other evil, or to learn the arts of Europe, by which we might be able to secure ourselves. Their power they never have exerted in our defence, and their arts they have studiously concealed from us. Their treaties are only to deceive, and their traffick only to defraud us. They have a written law among them, of which they boast, as derived from Him who made the earth and sea, and by which they profess to believe that man will be made happy when life shall forsake him. Why is not this law communicated to us? It is concealed because it is violated. For how can they preach it to an Indian nation, when I am told that one of its first precepts forbids them to do to others what they would not that others should do to them?

"But the time, perhaps, is now approaching, when the pride of usurpation shall be crushed, and the cruelties of invasion shall be revenged. The sons of rapacity have now drawn their swords upon each

other, and referred their claims to the decision of war; let us look unconcerned upon the slaughter, and remember that the death of every European delivers the country from a tyrant and a robber; for what is the claim of either nation, but the claim of the vulture to the leveret, of the tiger to the fawn? Let them then continue to dispute their title to regions which they cannot people, to purchase by danger and blood the empty dignity of dominion over mountains which they will never climb, and rivers which they will never pass. Let us endeavour, in the mean time, to learn their discipline, and to forge their weapons; and, when they shall be weakened with mutual slaughter, let us rush down upon them, force their remains to take shelter in their ships, and reign once more in our native country[b]."

No. 82. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1759

SIR, TO THE IDLER.

DISCOURSING in my last letter on the different practice of the Italian and Dutch painters, I observed, that "the Italian painter attends only

[b] "How far the seizing on countries already peopled, and driving out or massacring the innocent and defenceless natives, merely because they differed from their invaders in language, in religion, in customs, in government or in colour; how far such a conduct was consonant to nature, to reason or to Christianity, deserved well to be considered by those who have rendered their names immortal by thus civilizing mankind." Blackstone, Com. ii. 7.

I love the University of Salamanca, said Johnson, with warm emotion, for when the Spaniards were in doubt as to the lawfulness of their conquering America, the University of Salamanca gave it as their opinion, that it was not lawful. Boswell, i. 434.

The untaught eloquence of Indian feeling is well preserved in the language of Gertrude of Wyoming.

to the invariable, the great and general ideas which are fixed and inherent in universal nature.''

I was led into the subject of this letter by endeavouring to fix the original cause of this conduct of the Italian masters. If it can be proved that by this choice they selected the most beautiful part of the creation, it will show how much their principles are founded on reason, and, at the same time, discover the origin of our ideas of beauty.

I suppose it will be easily granted, that no man can judge whether any animal be beautiful in its kind, or deformed, who has seen only one of that species: this is as conclusive in regard to the human figure; so that if a man, born blind, was to recover his sight, and the most beautiful woman was brought before him, he could not determine whether she was handsome or not; nor, if the most beautiful and most deformed were produced, could he any better determine to which he should give the preference, having seen only those two. To distinguish beauty, then, implies the having seen many individuals of that species. If it is asked, how is more skill acquired by the observation of greater numbers? I answer that, in consequence of having seen many, the power is acquired, even without seeking after it, of distinguishing between accidental blemishes and excrescences which are continually varying the surface of Nature's works, and the invariable general form which Nature most frequently produces, and always seems to intend in her productions.

Thus, amongst the blades of grass or leaves of

the same tree, though no two can be found exactly alike, yet the general form is invariable: a naturalist, before he chose one as a sample, would examine many, since, if he took the first that occurred, it might have, by accident or otherwise, such a form as that it would scarcely be known to belong to that species; he selects, as the painter does, the most beautiful, that is, the most general form of nature.

Every species of the animal, as well as the vegetable creation, may be said to have a fixed or determinate form towards which nature is continually inclining, like various lines terminating in the centre; or it may be compared to pendulums vibrating in different directions over one central point; and as they all cross the centre, though only one passes through any other point, so it will be found that perfect beauty is oftener produced by nature than deformity; I do not mean than deformity in general, but than any one kind of deformity. To instance in a particular part of a feature: the line that forms the ridge of the nose is beautiful when it is straight; this then is the central form, which is oftener found than either concave, convex or any other irregular form that shall be proposed. As we are then more accustomed to beauty than deformity, we may conclude that to be the reason why we approve and admire it, as we approve and admire customs and fashions of dress for no other reason than that we are used to them; so that, though habit and custom cannot be said to be the cause of beauty, it is certainly the cause of our liking it; and I have no doubt but

that, if we were more used to deformity than beauty, deformity would then lose the idea now annexed to it, and take that of beauty; as, if the whole world should agree that *yes* and *no* should change their meanings, *yes* would then deny, and *no* would affirm.

Whoever undertakes to proceed further in this argument, and endeavours to fix a general criterion of beauty respecting different species, or to show why one species is more beautiful than another, it will be required from him first to prove that one species is really more beautiful than another. That we prefer one to the other, and with very good reason, will be readily granted; but it does not follow from thence that we think it a more beautiful form; for we have no criterion of form by which to determine our judgment. He who says a swan is more beautiful than a dove, means little more than that he has more pleasure in seeing a swan than a dove, either from the stateliness of its motions, or its being a more rare bird; and he who gives the preference to the dove, does it from some association of ideas of innocence that he always annexes to the dove; but, if he pretends to defend the preference he gives to one or the other by endeavouring to prove that this more beautiful form proceeds from a particular gradation of magnitude, undulation of a curve, or direction of a line, or whatever other conceit of his imagination he shall fix on as a criterion of form, he will be continually contradicting himself, and find at last, that the great Mother of Nature will not be subjected to such narrow rules. Among the various

reasons why we prefer one part of her works to another, the most general, I believe, is habit and custom; custom makes, in a certain sense, white black, and black white; it is custom alone determines our preference of the colour of the Europeans to the Æthiopians; and they, for the same reason, prefer their own colour to ours. I suppose nobody will doubt, if one of their painters were to paint the goddess of beauty, but that he would represent her black, with thick lips, flat nose, and woolly hair; and, it seems to me, he would act very unnaturally if he did not; for by what criterion will any one dispute the propriety of his idea? We, indeed, say, that the form and colour of the European is preferable to that of the Æthiopian; but I know of no reason we have for it, but that we are more accustomed to it. It is absurd to say, that beauty is possessed of attractive powers, which irresistibly seize the corresponding mind with love and admiration, since that argument is equally conclusive in favour of the white and the black philosopher.

The black and white nations must, in respect of beauty, be considered as of different kinds, at least a different species of the same kind; from one of which to the other, as I observed, no inference can be drawn.

Novelty is said to be one of the causes of beauty: that novelty is a very sufficient reason why we should admire, is not denied; but, because it is uncommon, is it, therefore, beautiful? The beauty that is produced by colour, as when we prefer one bird to another, though of the same form, on account of its

colour, has nothing to do with this argument, which reaches only to form. I have here considered the word *beauty* as being properly applied to form alone. There is a necessity of fixing this confined sense; for there can be no argument, if the sense of the word is extended to every thing that is approved. A rose may as well be said to be beautiful, because it has a fine smell, as a bird because of its colour. When we apply the word *beauty* we do not mean always by it a more beautiful form, but something valuable on account of its rarity, usefulness, colour, or any other property. A horse is said to be a beautiful animal; but, had a horse as few good qualities as a tortoise, I do not imagine that he would be then esteemed beautiful.

A fitness to the end proposed, is said to be another cause of beauty; but supposing we were proper judges of what form is the most proper in an animal to constitute strength or swiftness, we always determine concerning its beauty, before we exert our understanding to judge of its fitness.

From what has been said, it may be inferred, that the works of nature, if we compare one species with another, are all equally beautiful; and that preference is given from custom, or some association of ideas: and that, in creatures of the same species, beauty is the medium or centre of all various forms.

To conclude, then, by way of corollary: If it has been proved, that the painter, by attending to the invariable and general ideas of nature, produces beauty, he must, by regarding minute particu-

larities and accidental discriminations, deviate from the universal rule, and pollute his canvass with deformity[c].

No. 83. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1759

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

I SUPPOSE you have forgotten that many weeks ago I promised to send you an account of my companions at the Wells. You would not deny me a place among the most faithful votaries of idleness, if you knew how often I have recollected my engagement, and contented myself to delay the performance for some reason which I durst not examine because I knew it to be false; how often I have sat down to write, and rejoiced at interruption; and how often I have praised the dignity of resolution, determined at night to write in the morning, and deferred it in the morning to the quiet hours of night.

I have at last begun what I have long wished at an end, and find it more easy than I expected to continue my narration.

Our assembly could boast no such constellation of intellects as Clarendon's band of associates. We had among us no Selden, Falkland or Waller; but we had men not less important in their own eyes, though less distinguished by the publick; and many a time have we lamented the partiality of mankind, and agreed that men of the deepest inquiry sometimes let their discoveries die away in silence, that the most

[c] By Sir Joshua Reynolds.

comprehensive observers have seldom opportunities of imparting their remarks, and that modest merit passes in the crowd unknown and unheeded.

One of the greatest men of the society was Sim Scruple, who lives in a continual equipoise of doubt, and is a constant enemy to confidence and dogmatism. Sim's favourite topick of conversation is the narrowness of the human mind, the fallaciousness of our senses, the prevalence of early prejudice, and the uncertainty of appearances. Sim has many doubts about the nature of death, and is sometimes inclined to believe that sensation may survive motion, and that a dead man may feel though he cannot stir. He has sometimes hinted that man might, perhaps, have been naturally a quadruped; and thinks it would be very proper, that at the Foundling Hospital some children should be inclosed in an apartment in which the nurses should be obliged to walk half upon four and half upon two legs, that the younglings, being bred without the prejudice of example, might have no other guide than nature, and might at last come forth into the world as genius should direct, erect or prone, on two legs or on four.

The next, in dignity of mien and fluency of talk, was Dick Wormwood, whose sole delight is to find every thing wrong. Dick never enters a room but he shows that the door and the chimney are ill-placed. He never walks into the fields but he finds ground ploughed which is fitter for pasture. He is always an enemy to the present fashion. He holds that all the beauty and virtue of women will soon be destroyed

by the use of tea[d]. He triumphs when he talks on the present system of education, and tell us, with great vehemence, that we are learning words when we should learn things. He is of opinion that we suck in errours at the nurse's breast, and thinks it extremely ridiculous that children should be taught to use the right hand rather than the left.

Bob Sturdy considers it as a point of honour to say again what he has once said, and wonders how any man, that has been known to alter his opinion, can look his neighbours in the face. Bob is the most formidable disputant of the whole company; for, without troubling himself to search for reasons, he tires his antagonist with repeated affirmations. When Bob has been attacked for an hour with all the powers of eloquence and reason, and his position appears to all but himself utterly untenable, he always closes the debate with his first declaration, introduced by a stout preface of contemptuous civility. "All this is very judicious; you may talk, Sir, as you please; but I will still say what I said at first." Bob deals much in universals, which he has now obliged us to let pass without exceptions. He lives on an annuity, and holds that *there are as many thieves as traders;* he is of loyalty unshaken, and always maintains, that *he who sees a Jacobite sees a rascal.*

Phil Gentle is an enemy to the rudeness of con-

[d] Dr. Johnson was, as he has humourously described himself, "a hardened and shameless tea drinker." See his amusing Review of a Journal of Eight Days' Journey and his Reply to a paper in the Gazetteer, May 26, 1757.

tradiction and the turbulence of debate. Phil has no notions of his own, and, therefore, willingly catches from the last speaker such as he shall drop. This flexibility of ignorance is easily accommodated to any tenet; his only difficulty is, when the disputants grow zealous, how to be of two contrary opinions at once. If no appeal is made to his judgment, he has the art of distributing his attention and his smiles in such a manner, that each thinks him of his own party; but if he is obliged to speak, he then observes that the question is difficult; that he never received so much pleasure from a debate before; that neither of the controvertists could have found his match in any other company; that Mr. Wormwood's assertion is very well supported, and yet there is great force in what Mr. Scruple advanced against it. By this indefinite declaration both are commonly satisfied; for he that has prevailed is in good humour; and he that has felt his own weakness is very glad to have escaped so well.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

ROBIN SPRITELY.

No. 84. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1759

BIOGRAPHY is, of the various kinds of narrative writing, that which is most eagerly read, and most easily applied to the purposes of life.

In romances, when the wide field of possibility lies open to invention, the incidents may easily be made more numerous, the vicissitudes more sudden, and the events more wonderful; but from the time of

life when fancy begins to be overruled by reason and corrected by experience, the most artful tale raises little curiosity when it is known to be false[e]; though it may, perhaps, be sometimes read as a model of a neat or elegant style, not for the sake of knowing what it contains, but how it is written; or those that are weary of themselves, may have recourse to it as a pleasing dream, of which, when they awake, they voluntarily dismiss the images from their minds.

The examples and events of history press, indeed, upon the mind with the weight of truth; but when they are reposited in the memory, they are oftener employed for show than use, and rather diversify conversation than regulate life. Few are engaged in such scenes as give them opportunities of growing wiser by the downfall of statesmen or the defeat of generals. The stratagems of war, and the intrigues of courts, are read by far the greater part of mankind with the same indifference as the adventures of fabled heroes, or the revolutions of a fairy region. Between falsehood and useless truth there is little difference. As gold which he cannot spend will make no man rich, so knowledge which he cannot apply will make no man wise.

[e] It is somewhere recorded of a retired citizen, that he was in the habit of again and again perusing the incomparable story of Robinson Crusoe without a suspicion of its authenticity. At length a friend assured him of its being a work of fiction. What you say, replied the old man mournfully, may be true; but your information has taken away the only comfort of my age.

——— Pol, me occidistis, amici,
Non servastis, ait; cui sic extorta voluptas,
Et demtus per vim mentis gratissimus error.
Hor. Lib. ii. Ep. ii. 138.

The mischievous consequences of vice and folly, of irregular desires and predominant passions, are best discovered by those relations which are levelled with the general surface of life, which tell not how any man became great, but how he was made happy; not how he lost the favour of his prince, but how he became discontented with himself.

Those relations are, therefore, commonly of most value in which the writer tells his own story. He that recounts the life of another, commonly dwells most upon conspicuous events, lessens the familiarity of his tale to increase its dignity, shows his favourite at a distance, decorated and magnified like the ancient actors in their tragick dress, and endeavours to hide the man that he may produce a hero.

But if it be true, which was said by a French prince, "that no man was a hero to the servants of his chamber," it is equally true, that every man is yet less a hero to himself. He that is most elevated above the crowd by the importance of his employments, or the reputation of his genius, feels himself affected by fame or business but as they influence his domestick life. The high and low, as they have the same faculties and the same senses, have no less similitude in their pains and pleasures. The sensations are the same in all, though produced by very different occasions. The prince feels the same pain when an invader seizes a province, as the farmer when a thief drives away his cow. Men thus equal in themselves will appear equal in honest and impartial biography; and those whom fortune or nature places

at the greatest distance may afford instruction to each other.

The writer of his own life has, at least, the first qualification of an historian, the knowledge of the truth; and though it may be plausibly objected that his temptations to disguise it are equal to his opportunities of knowing it, yet I cannot but think that impartiality may be expected with equal confidence from him that relates the passages of his own life, as from him that delivers the transactions of another.

Certainty of knowledge not only excludes mistake, but fortifies veracity. What we collect by conjecture, and by conjecture only, can one man judge of another's motives or sentiments, is easily modified by fancy or by desire; as objects imperfectly discerned take forms from the hope or fear of the beholder. But that which is fully known cannot be falsified but with reluctance of understanding, and alarm of conscience: of understanding, the lover of truth; of conscience, the sentinel of virtue.

He that writes the life of another is either his friend or his enemy, and wishes either to exalt his praise or aggravate his infamy: many temptations to falsehood will occur in the disguise of passions, too specious to fear much resistance. Love of virtue will animate panegyrick, and hatred of wickedness imbitter censure. The zeal of gratitude, the ardour of patriotism, fondness for an opinion, or fidelity to a party, may easily overpower the vigilance of a mind habitually well disposed, and prevail over unassisted and unfriended veracity.

But he that speaks of himself has no motive to falsehood or partiality except self-love, by which all have so often been betrayed, that all are on the watch against its artifices. He that writes an apology for a single action, to confute an accusation, to recommend himself to favour, is, indeed, always to be suspected of favouring his own cause; but he that sits down calmly and voluntarily to review his life for the admonition of posterity, or to amuse himself, and leaves this account unpublished, may be commonly presumed to tell truth, since falsehood cannot appease his own mind, and fame will not be heard beneath the tomb.

No. 85. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1759

ONE of the peculiarities which distinguish the present age is the multiplication of books. Every day brings new advertisements of literary undertakings, and we are flattered with repeated promises of growing wise on easier terms than our progenitors.

How much either happiness or knowledge is advanced by this multitude of authors, it is not very easy to decide. He that teaches us any thing which we knew not before, is undoubtedly to be reverenced as a master.

He that conveys knowledge by more pleasing ways, may very properly be loved as a benefactor; and he that supplies life with innocent amusement, will be certainly caressed as a pleasing companion.

But few of those who fill the world with books

have any pretensions to the hope either of pleasing or instructing. They have often no other task than to lay two books before them, out of which they compile a third, without any new materials of their own, and with very little application of judgment to those which former authors have supplied.

That all compilations are useless, I do not assert. Particles of science are often very widely scattered. Writers of extensive comprehension have incidental remarks upon topicks very remote from the principal subject, which are often more valuable than formal treatises, and which yet are not known because they are not promised in the title. He that collects those under proper heads is very laudably employed, for, though he exerts no great abilities in the work, he facilitates the progress of others, and by making that easy of attainment which is already written, may give some mind, more vigorous or more adventurous than his own, leisure for new thoughts and original designs.

But the collections poured lately from the press have been seldom made at any great expense of time or inquiry, and, therefore, only serve to distract choice without supplying any real want.

It is observed that "a corrupt society has many laws;" I know not whether it is not equally true, that "an ignorant age has many books." When the treasures of ancient knowledge lie unexamined, and original authors are neglected and forgotten, compilers and plagiaries are encouraged, who give us again what we had before, and grow great by setting

before us what our own sloth had hidden from our view.

Yet are not even these writers to be indiscriminately censured and rejected. Truth like beauty varies its fashions, and is best recommended by different dresses to different minds; and he that recalls the attention of mankind to any part of learning which time has left behind it, may be truly said to advance the literature of his own age. As the manners of nations vary, new topicks of persuasion become necessary, and new combinations of imagery are produced; and he that can accommodate himself to the reigning taste, may always have readers who, perhaps, would not have looked upon better performances.

To exact of every man who writes, that he should say something new, would be to reduce authors to a small number; to oblige the most fertile genius to say only what is new would be to contract his volumes to a few pages. Yet, surely, there ought to be some bounds to repetition; libraries ought no more to be heaped for ever with the same thoughts differently expressed, than with the same books differently decorated.

The good or evil which these secondary writers produce is seldom of any long duration. As they owe their existence to change of fashion, they commonly disappear when a new fashion becomes prevalent. The authors that in any nation last from age to age are very few, because there are very few that have any other claim to notice than that they catch hold

on present curiosity, and gratify some accidental desire, or produce some temporary conveniency.

But however the writers of the day may despair of future fame, they ought at least to forbear any present mischief. Though they cannot arrive at eminent heights of excellence, they might keep themselves harmless. They might take care to inform themselves before they attempt to inform others, and exert the little influence which they have for honest purposes.

But such is the present state of our literature, that the ancient sage, who thought *a great book a great evil*, would now think the multitude of books a multitude of evils. He would consider a bulky writer who engrossed a year, and a swarm of pamphleteers who stole each an hour, as equal wasters of human life, and would make no other difference between them, than between a beast of prey and a flight of locusts.

No. 86. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1759

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

I AM a young lady newly married to a young gentleman. Our fortune is large, our minds are vacant, our dispositions gay, our acquaintances numerous, and our relations splendid. We considered that marriage, like life, has its youth; that the first year is the year of gaiety and revel, and resolved to see the shows and feel the joys of London, before the increase of our family should confine us to domestick cares and domestick pleasures.

Little time was spent in preparation; the coach was harnessed, and a few days brought us to London, and we alighted at a lodging provided for us by Miss Biddy Trifle, a maiden niece of my husband's father, where we found apartments on a second floor, which my cousin told us would serve us till we could please ourselves with a more commodious and elegant habitation, and which she had taken at a very high price, because it was not worth the while to make a hard bargain for so short a time.

Here I intended to lie concealed till my new clothes were made and my new lodging hired; but Miss Trifle had so industriously given notice of our arrival to all her acquaintance, that I had the mortification next day of seeing the door thronged with painted coaches and chairs with coronets, and was obliged to receive all my husband's relations on a second floor.

Inconveniences are often balanced by some advantage: the elevation of my apartments furnished a subject for conversation, which, without some such help, we should have been in danger of wanting. Lady Stately told us how many years had passed since she climbed so many steps. Miss Airy ran to the window, and thought it charming to see the walkers so little in the street; and Miss Gentle went to try the same experiment, and screamed to find herself so far above the ground.

They all knew that we intended to remove, and, therefore, all gave me advice about a proper choice. One street was recommended for the purity of its

air, another for its freedom from noise, another for its nearness to the Park, another because there was but a step from it to all places of diversion, and another because its inhabitants enjoyed at once the town and country.

I had civility enough to hear every recommendation with a look of curiosity, while it was made, and of acquiescence, when it was concluded, but in my heart felt no other desire than to be free from the disgrace of a second floor, and cared little where I should fix, if the apartments were spacious and splendid.

Next day a chariot was hired, and Miss Trifle was despatched to find a lodging. She returned in the afternoon, with an account of a charming place, to which my husband went in the morning to make the contract. Being young and unexperienced, he took with him his friend Ned Quick, a gentleman of great skill in rooms and furniture, who sees, at a single glance, whatever there is to be commended or censured. Mr. Quick, at the first view of the house, declared that it could not be inhabited, for the sun in the afternoon shone with full glare on the windows of the dining-room.

Miss Trifle went out again, and soon discovered another lodging, which Mr. Quick went to survey, and found, that, whenever the wind should blow from the east, all the smoke of the city would be driven upon it.

A magnificent set of rooms was then found in one of the streets near Westminster-Bridge, which

Miss Trifle preferred to any which she had yet seen; but Mr. Quick, having mused upon it for a time, concluded that it would be too much exposed in the morning to the fogs that rise from the river.

Thus Mr. Quick proceeded to give us every day new testimonies of his taste and circumspection; sometimes the street was too narrow for a double range of coaches; sometimes it was an obscure place, not inhabited by persons of quality. Some places were dirty, and some crowded; in some houses the furniture was ill-suited, and in others the stairs were too narrow. He had such fertility of objections that Miss Trifle was at last tired, and desisted from all attempts for our accommodation.

In the mean time I have still continued to see my company on a second floor, and am asked twenty times a day when I am to leave those odious lodgings, in which I live tumultuously without pleasure, and expensively without honour. My husband thinks so highly of Mr. Quick, that he cannot be persuaded to remove without his approbation; and Mr. Quick thinks his reputation raised by the multiplication of difficulties.

In this distress to whom can I have recourse? I find my temper vitiated by daily disappointment, by the sight of pleasures which I cannot partake, and the possession of riches which I cannot enjoy. Dear Mr. Idler, inform my husband that he is trifling away, in superfluous vexation, the few months which custom has appropriated to delight; that matrimonial quarrels are not easily reconciled between those

that have no children; that wherever we settle he must always find some inconvenience; but nothing is so much to be avoided as a perpetual state of inquiry and suspense.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

PEGGY HEARTLESS.

No. 87. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1759

OF what we know not, we can only judge by what we know. Every novelty appears more wonderful as it is more remote from any thing with which experience or testimony has hitherto acquainted us; and, if it passes further beyond the notions that we have been accustomed to form, it becomes at last incredible.

We seldom consider that human knowledge is very narrow, that national manners are formed by chance, that uncommon conjunctures of causes produce rare effects, or that what is impossible at one time or place may yet happen in another. It is always easier to deny than to inquire. To refuse credit confers for a moment an appearance of superiority, which every little mind is tempted to assume when it may be gained so cheaply as by withdrawing attention from evidence, and declining the fatigue of comparing probabilities. The most pertinacious and vehement demonstrator may be wearied in time by continual negation; and incredulity, which an old poet, in his address to Raleigh, calls *the wit of fools*, obtunds the argument which it cannot answer, as

woolsacks deaden arrows though they cannot repel them.

Many relations of travellers have been slighted as fabulous, till more frequent voyages have confirmed their veracity; and it may reasonably be imagined, that many ancient historians are unjustly suspected of falsehood, because our own times afford nothing that resembles what they tell[f].

Had only the writers of antiquity informed us, that there was once a nation in which the wife lay down upon the burning pile only to mix her ashes with those of her husband, we should have thought it a tale to be told with that of Endymion's commerce with the moon. Had only a single traveller related, that many nations of the earth were black, we should have thought the accounts of the Negroes and of the Phœnix equally credible. But of black men the numbers are too great who are now repining under English cruelty; and the custom of voluntary cremation is not yet lost among the ladies of India.

Few narratives will either to men or women appear more incredible than the histories of the Amazons; of female nations of whose constitution it was the essential and fundamental law to exclude men from all participation, either of publick affairs or domestick business; where female armies marched under female captains, female farmers gathered the

[f] *Le vrai n'est pas toujours le vraisemblable.* The researches of Gibbon, Rennel and Mitford, the travels of Bruce and Belzoni have fully proved the truth of this maxim in the case of Herodotus.

harvest, female partners danced together, and female wits diverted one another.

Yet several ages of antiquity have transmitted accounts of the Amazons of Caucasus; and of the Amazons of America, who have given their name to the greatest river in the world, Condamine lately found such memorials, as can be expected among erratick and unlettered nations, where events are recorded only by tradition, and new swarms, settling in the country from time to time, confuse and efface all traces of former times.

To die with husbands, or to live without them, are the two extremes which the prudence and moderation of European ladies have, in all ages, equally declined; they have never been allured to death by the kindness or civility of the politest nations, nor has the roughness and brutality of more savage countries ever provoked them to doom their male associates to irrevocable banishment. The Bohemian matrons are said to have made one short struggle for superiority; but, instead of banishing the men, they contented themselves with condemning them to servile offices; and their constitution, thus left imperfect, was quickly overthrown.

There is, I think, no class of English women from whom we are in any danger of Amazonian usurpation. The old maids seem nearest to independence, and most likely to be animated by revenge against masculine authority; they often speak of men with acrimonious vehemence, but it is seldom found that they have any settled hatred against them, and it

is yet more rarely observed that they have any kindness for each other. They will not easily combine in any plot; and if they should ever agree to retire and fortify themselves in castles or in mountains, the sentinel will betray the passes in spite, and the garrison will capitulate upon easy terms, if the besiegers have handsome swordknots, and are well supplied with fringe and lace.

The gamesters, if they were united, would make a formidable body; and, since they consider men only as beings that are to lose their money, they might live together without any wish for the officiousness of gallantry or the delights of diversified conversation. But as nothing would hold them together but the hope of plundering one another, their government would fail from the defect of its principles; the men would need only to neglect them, and they would perish in a few weeks by a civil war.

I do not mean to censure the ladies of England as defective in knowledge or in spirit, when I suppose them unlikely to revive the military honours of their sex. The character of the ancient Amazons was rather terrible than lovely; the hand could not be very delicate that was only employed in drawing the bow and brandishing the battle-axe; their power was maintained by cruelty, their courage was deformed by ferocity, and their example only shows that men and women live best together.

THE IDLER

No. 88. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1759

* *Hodie quid egisti?*

WHEN the philosophers of the last age were first congregated into the Royal Society, great expectations were raised of the sudden progress of useful arts; the time was supposed to be near, when engines should turn by a perpetual motion, and health be secured by the universal medicine; when learning should be facilitated by a real character, and commerce extended by ships which could reach their ports in defiance of the tempest.

But improvement is naturally slow. The society met and parted without any visible diminution of the miseries of life. The gout and stone were still painful, the ground that was not ploughed brought no harvest, and neither oranges nor grapes would grow upon the hawthorn. At last, those who were disappointed began to be angry; those likewise who hated innovation were glad to gain an opportunity of ridiculing men who had depreciated, perhaps with too much arrogance, the knowledge of antiquity. And it appears, from some of their earliest apologies, that the philosophers felt with great sensibility the unwelcome importunities of those who were daily asking, "What have ye done?"

The truth is, that little had been done compared with what fame had been suffered to promise; and the question could only be answered by general apologies and by new hopes, which, when they were frustrated, gave a new occasion to the same vexatious inquiry.

This fatal question has disturbed the quiet of many other minds. He that in the latter part of his life too strictly inquires what he has done, can very seldom receive from his own heart such an account as will give him satisfaction.

We do not indeed so often disappoint others as ourselves. We not only think more highly than others of our own abilities, but allow ourselves to form hopes which we never communicate, and please our thoughts with employments which none ever will allot us, and with elevations to which we are never expected to rise; and when our days and years have passed away in common business or common amusements, and we find at last that we have suffered our purposes to sleep till the time of action is past, we are reproached only by our own reflections; neither our friends nor our enemies wonder that we live and die like the rest of mankind; that we live without notice, and die without memorial; they know not what task we had proposed, and, therefore, cannot discern whether it is finished.

He that compares what he has done with what he has left undone, will feel the effect which must always follow the comparison of imagination with reality; he will look with contempt on his own unimportance, and wonder to what purpose he came into the world; he will repine that he shall leave behind him no evidence of his having been, that he has added nothing to the system of life, but has glided from youth to age among the crowd, without any effort for distinction.

Man is seldom willing to let fall the opinion of his own dignity, or to believe that he does little only because every individual is a very little being. He is better content to want diligence than power, and sooner confesses the depravity of his will than the imbecility of his nature.

From this mistaken notion of human greatness it proceeds, that many who pretend to have made great advances in wisdom so loudly declare that they despise themselves. If I had ever found any of the self-contemners much irritated or pained by the consciousness of their meanness, I should have given them consolation by observing, that a little more than nothing is as much as can be expected from a being, who, with respect to the multitudes about him, is himself little more than nothing. Every man is obliged by the Supreme Master of the universe to improve all the opportunities of good which are afforded him, and to keep in continual activity such abilities as are bestowed upon him. But he has no reason to repine, though his abilities are small and his opportunities few. He that has improved the virtue, or advanced the happiness of one fellow-creature, he that has ascertained a single moral proposition, or added one useful experiment to natural knowledge, may be contented with his own performance, and, with respect to mortals like himself, may demand, like Augustus, to be dismissed at his departure with applause.

No. 89. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1759

Ἀνέχου καὶ ἀπέχου. EPICT.

HOW evil came into the world; for what reason is it that life is overspread with such boundless varieties of misery; why the only thinking being of this globe is doomed to think merely to be wretched, and to pass his time from youth to age in fearing or in suffering calamities, is a question which philosophers have long asked, and which philosophy could never answer.

Religion informs us that misery and sin were produced together. The depravation of human will was followed by a disorder of the harmony of nature; and by that providence which often places antidotes in the neighbourhood of poisons, vice was checked by misery, lest it should swell to universal and unlimited dominion.

A state of innocence and happiness is so remote from all that we have ever seen, that though we can easily conceive it possible, and may, therefore, hope to attain it, yet our speculations upon it must be general and confused. We can discover that where there is universal innocence, there will probably be universal happiness; for, why should afflictions be permitted to infest beings who are not in danger of corruption from blessings, and where there is no use of terrour nor cause of punishment? But in a world like ours, where our senses assault us, and our hearts betray us, we should pass on from crime to crime, heedless and remorseless, if misery did not

stand in our way, and our own pains admonish us of our folly.

Almost all the moral good, which is left among us, is the apparent effect of physical evil.

Goodness is divided by divines into soberness, righteousness and godliness. Let it be examined how each of these duties would be practised, if there were no physical evil to enforce it.

Sobriety, or temperance, is nothing but the forbearance of pleasure; and if pleasure was not followed by pain, who would forbear it? We see every hour those in whom the desire of present indulgence overpowers all sense of past and all foresight of future misery. In a remission of the gout, the drunkard returns to his wine, and the glutton to his feast; and if neither disease nor poverty were felt or dreaded, every one would sink down in idle sensuality, without any care of others, or of himself. To eat and drink, and lie down to sleep, would be the whole business of mankind.

Righteousness, or the system of social duty, may be subdivided into justice and charity. Of justice one of the Heathen sages has shown, with great acuteness, that it was impressed upon mankind only by the inconveniences which injustice had produced. "In the first ages," says he, "men acted without any rule but the impulse of desire; they practised injustice upon others, and suffered it from others in their turn; but in time it was discovered, that the pain of suffering wrong was greater than the pleasure of doing it; and mankind, by a general compact,

submitted to the restraint of laws, and resigned the pleasure to escape the pain."

Of charity it is superfluous to observe, that it could have no place if there were no want; for of a virtue which could not be practised, the omission could not be culpable. Evil is not only the occasional, but the efficient cause of charity; we are incited to the relief of misery by the consciousness that we have the same nature with the sufferer, that we are in danger of the same distresses, and may sometimes implore the same assistance.

Godliness, or piety, is elevation of the mind towards the Supreme Being, and extension of the thoughts to another life. The other life is future, and the Supreme Being is invisible. None would have recourse to an invisible power, but that all other subjects have eluded their hopes. None would fix their attention upon the future, but that they are discontented with the present. If the senses were feasted with perpetual pleasure, they would always keep the mind in subjection. Reason has no authority over us, but by its power to warn us against evil.

In childhood, while our minds are yet unoccupied, religion is impressed upon them, and the first years of almost all who have been well educated are passed in a regular discharge of the duties of piety. But as we advance forward into the crowds of life, innumerable delights solicit our inclinations, and innumerable cares distract our attention; the time of youth is passed in noisy frolicks; manhood is led on from hope to hope, and from project to project; the

dissoluteness of pleasure, the inebriation of success, the ardour of expectation, and the vehemence of competition, chain down the mind alike to the present scene, nor is it remembered how soon this mist of trifles must be scattered, and the bubbles that float upon the rivulet of life be lost for ever in the gulph of eternity. To this consideration scarcely any man is awakened but by some pressing and resistless evil. The death of those from whom he derived his pleasures, or to whom he destined his possessions, some disease which shows him the vanity of all external acquisitions, or the gloom of age, which intercepts his prospects of long enjoyment, forces him to fix his hopes upon another state; and when he has contended with the tempests of life till his strength fails him, he flies at last to the shelter of religion.

That misery does not make all virtuous, experience too certainly informs us; but it is no less certain that of what virtue there is, misery produces far the greater part. Physical evil may be, therefore, endured with patience, since it is the cause of moral good; and patience itself is one virtue by which we are prepared for that state in which evil shall be no more[8].

No. 90. SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 1760

IT is a complaint which has been made from time to time, and which seems to have lately become more frequent, that English oratory, however for-

[8] For a fuller exposition of Johnson's sentiments on this dark and deep subject, see his Review of Soame Jenyns' Nature and Origin of Evil.

cible in argument, or elegant in expression, is deficient and inefficacious, because our speakers want the grace and energy of action.

Among the numerous projectors who are desirous to refine our manners, and improve our faculties, some are willing to supply the deficiency of our speakers[h]. We have had more than one exhortation to study the neglected art of moving the passions, and have been encouraged to believe that our tongues, however feeble in themselves, may, by the help of our hands and legs, obtain an uncontroulable dominion over the most stubborn audience, animate the insensible, engage the careless, force tears from the obdurate, and money from the avaricious.

If by sleight of hand, or nimbleness of foot, all these wonders can be performed, he that shall neglect to attain the free use of his limbs may be justly censured as criminally lazy. But I am afraid that no specimen of such effects will easily be shown. If I could once find a speaker in 'Change-Alley raising the price of stocks by the power of persuasive gestures, I should very zealously recommend the study of his art; but having never seen any action by which language was much assisted, I have been hitherto inclined to doubt whether my countrymen are not blamed too hastily for their calm and motionless utterance.

Foreigners of many nations accompany their

[h]Johnson might here be glancing at the oratorical lectures of the modern *Rhetor* Sheridan, whose plans he delighted incessantly to ridicule. See Boswell. Many acute remarks occur in Hume's Essay on Eloquence.

speech with action; but why should their example have more influence upon us than ours upon them? Customs are not to be changed but for better. Let those who desire to reform us show the benefits of the change proposed. When the Frenchman waves his hands and writhes his body in recounting the revolutions of a game at cards, or the Neapolitan, who tells the hour of the day, shows upon his fingers the number which he mentions; I do not perceive that their manual exercise is of much use, or that they leave any image more deeply impressed by their bustle and vehemence of communication.

Upon the English stage there is no want of action; but the difficulty of making it at once various and proper, and its perpetual tendency to become ridiculous, notwithstanding all the advantages which art and show, and custom and prejudice can give it, may prove how little it can be admitted into any other place, where it can have no recommendation but from truth and nature.

The use of English oratory is only at the bar, in the parliament, and in the church. Neither the judges of our laws nor the representatives of our people would be much affected by laboured gesticulation, or believe any man the more because he rolled his eyes, or puffed his cheeks, or spread abroad his arms, or stamped the ground, or thumped his breast, or turned his eyes sometimes to the ceiling and sometimes to the floor. Upon men intent only upon truth, the arm of an orator has little power; a credible testimony, or a cogent argument will overcome

all the art of modulation, and all the violence of contortion.

It is well known that, in the city which may be called the parent of oratory, all the arts of mechanical persuasion were banished from the court of supreme judicature. The judges of the Areopagus considered action and vociferation as a foolish appeal to the external senses, and unworthy to be practised before those who had no desire of idle amusement, and whose only pleasure was to discover right.

Whether action may not be yet of use in churches, where the preacher addresses a mingled audience, may deserve inquiry. It is certain that the senses are more powerful as the reason is weaker; and that he whose ears convey little to his mind, may sometimes listen with his eyes till truth may gradually take possession of his heart. If there be any use of gesticulation, it must be applied to the ignorant and rude, who will be more affected by vehemence than delighted by propriety. In the pulpit little action can be proper, for action can illustrate nothing but that to which it may be referred by nature or by custom. He that imitates by his hand a motion which he describes, explains it by natural similitude; he that lays his hand on his breast, when he expresses pity, enforces his words by a customary allusion. But theology has few topicks to which action can be appropriated; that action which is vague and indeterminate will at last settle into habit, and habitual peculiarities are quickly ridiculous.

It is, perhaps, the character of the English to de-

spise trifles; and that art may surely be accounted a trifle which is at once useless and ostentatious, which can seldom be practised with propriety, and which, as the mind is more cultivated, is less powerful. Yet as all innocent means are to be used for the propagation of truth, I would not deter those who are employed in preaching to common congregations from any practice which they may find persuasive: for, compared with the conversion of sinners, propriety and elegance are less than nothing.

No. 91. SATURDAY, JANUARY 12, 1760

IT is common to overlook what is near, by keeping the eye fixed upon something remote. In the same manner present opportunities are neglected, and attainable good is slighted, by minds busied in extensive ranges, and intent upon future advantages. Life, however short, is made still shorter by waste of time, and its progress towards happiness, though naturally slow, is yet retarded by unnecessary labour.

The difficulty of obtaining knowledge is universally confessed. To fix deeply in the mind the principles of science, to settle their limitations, and deduce the long succession of their consequences; to comprehend the whole compass of complicated systems, with all the arguments, objections and solutions, and to reposite in the intellectual treasury the numberless facts, experiments, apophthegms and positions, which must stand single in the memory, and of which none has any perceptible connexion with the rest, is a task which, though undertaken with ardour

and pursued with diligence, must at last be left unfinished by the frailty of our nature.

To make the way to learning either less short or less smooth, is certainly absurd; yet this is the apparent effect of the prejudice which seems to prevail among us in favour of foreign authors, and of the contempt of our native literature, which this excursive curiosity must necessarily produce. Every man is more speedily instructed by his own language, than by any other; before we search the rest of the world for teachers, let us try whether we may not spare our trouble by finding them at home.

The riches of the English language are much greater than they are commonly supposed. Many useful and valuable books lie buried in shops and libraries, unknown and unexamined, unless some lucky compiler opens them by chance, and finds an easy spoil of wit and learning. I am far from intending to insinuate, that other languages are not necessary to him who aspires to eminence, and whose whole life is devoted to study; but to him who reads only for amusement, or whose purpose is not to deck himself with the honours of literature, but to be qualified for domestick usefulness, and sit down content with subordinate reputation, we have authors sufficient to fill up all the vacancies of his time, and gratify most of his wishes for information.

Of our poets I need say little, because they are, perhaps, the only authors to whom their country has done justice. We consider the whole succession from Spencer to Pope as superior to any names which

the continent can boast; and, therefore, the poets of other nations, however familiarly they may be sometimes mentioned, are very little read, except by those who design to borrow their beauties.

There is, I think, not one of the liberal arts which may not be competently learned in the English language. He that searches after mathematical knowledge may busy himself among his own countrymen, and will find one or other able to instruct him in every part of those abstruse sciences. He that is delighted with experiments, and wishes to know the nature of bodies from certain and visible effects, is happily placed where the mechanical philosophy was first established by a publick institution, and from which it was spread to all other countries.

The more airy and elegant studies of philology and criticism have little need of any foreign help. Though our language, not being very analogical, gives few opportunities for grammatical researches, yet we have not wanted authors who have considered the principles of speech; and with critical writings we abound sufficiently to enable pedantry to impose rules which can seldom be observed, and vanity to talk of books which are seldom read.

But our own language has, from the Reformation to the present time, been chiefly dignified and adorned by the works of our divines, who, considered as commentators, controvertists, or preachers, have undoubtedly left all other nations far behind them. No vulgar language can boast such treasures of theological knowledge, or such multitudes of authors

at once learned, elegant and pious. Other countries and other communions have authors, perhaps, equal in abilities and diligence to ours; but if we unite number with excellence, there is certainly no nation which must not allow us to be superior. Of morality little is necessary to be said, because it is comprehended in practical divinity, and is, perhaps, better taught in English sermons than in any other books, ancient and modern. Nor shall I dwell on our excellence in metaphysical speculations, because he that reads the works of our divines will easily discover how far human subtilty has been able to penetrate.

Political knowledge is forced upon us by the form of our constitution; and all the mysteries of government are discovered in the attack or defence of every minister. The original law of society, the rights of subjects and the prerogatives of kings, have been considered with the utmost nicety, sometimes profoundly investigated, and sometimes familiarly explained.

Thus copiously instructive is the English language; and thus needless is all recourse to foreign writers. Let us not, therefore, make our neighbours proud by soliciting help which we do not want, nor discourage our own industry by difficulties which we need not suffer.

No. 92. SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 1760

WHATEVER is useful or honourable will be desired by many who never can obtain it; and that which cannot be obtained when it is desired,

artifice or folly will be diligent to counterfeit. Those to whom fortune has denied gold and diamonds decorate themselves with stones and metals; which have something of the show, but little of the value; and every moral excellence or intellectual faculty has some vice or folly which imitates its appearance.

Every man wishes to be wise, and they who cannot be wise are almost always cunning. The less is the real discernment of those whom business or conversation brings together, the more illusions are practised; nor is caution ever so necessary as with associates or opponents of feeble minds.

Cunning differs from wisdom as twilight from open day. He that walks in the sunshine goes boldly forward by the nearest way; he sees that where the path is straight and even, he may proceed in security, and where it is rough and crooked he easily complies with the turns, and avoids the obstructions. But the traveller in the dusk fears more as he sees less; he knows there may be danger, and, therefore, suspects that he is never safe, tries every step before he fixes his foot, and shrinks at every noise lest violence should approach him. Wisdom comprehends at once the end and the means, estimates easiness or difficulty, and is cautious or confident in due proportion. Cunning discovers little at a time, and has no other means of certainty than multiplication of stratagems and superfluity of suspicion. The man of cunning always considers that he can never be too safe, and, therefore, always keeps himself enveloped

in a mist, impenetrable, as he hopes, to the eye of rivalry or curiosity.

Upon this principle, Tom Double has formed a habit of eluding the most harmless question. What he has no inclination to answer, he pretends sometimes not to hear, and endeavours to divert the inquirer's attention by some other subject; but if he be pressed hard by repeated interrogation, he always evades a direct reply. Ask him whom he likes best on the stage; he is ready to tell that there are several excellent performers. Inquire when he was last at the coffee-house; he replies, that the weather has been bad lately. Desire him to tell the age of any of his acquaintance; he immediately mentions another who is older or younger.

Will Puzzle values himself upon a long reach. He foresees every thing before it will happen, though he never relates his prognostications till the event is past. Nothing has come to pass for these twenty years of which Mr. Puzzle had not given broad hints, and told at least that it was not proper to tell. Of those predictions, which every conclusion will equally verify, he always claims the credit, and wonders that his friends did not understand them. He supposes very truly that much may be known which he knows not, and, therefore, pretends to know much of which he and all mankind are equally ignorant. I desired his opinion yesterday of the German war, and was told, that if the Prussians were well supported, something great may be expected; but that they have very powerful enemies to en-

counter; that the Austrian general has long experience, and the Russians are hardy and resolute; but that no human power is invincible. I then drew the conversation to our own affairs, and invited him to balance the probabilities of war and peace. He told me that war requires courage, and negociation judgment, and that the time will come when it will be seen, whether our skill in treaty is equal to our bravery in battle. To this general prattle he will appeal hereafter, and will demand to have his foresight applauded, whoever shall at last be conquered or victorious.

With Ned Smuggle all is a secret. He believes himself watched by observation and malignity on every side, and rejoices in the dexterity by which he has escaped snares that never were laid. Ned holds that a man is never deceived if he never trusts, and, therefore, will not tell the name of his tailor or his hatter. He rides out every morning for the air, and pleases himself with thinking that nobody knows where he has been. When he dines with a friend, he never goes to his house the nearest way, but walks up a by-street to perplex the scent. When he has a coach called, he never tells him at the door the true place to which he is going, but stops him in the way that he may give him directions where nobody can hear him. The price of what he buys or sells is always concealed. He often takes lodgings in the country by a wrong name, and thinks that the world is wondering where he can be hid. All these transactions he registers in a

book, which, he says, will some time or other amaze posterity.

It is remarked by Bacon, that many men try to procure reputation only by objections, of which, if they are once admitted, the nullity never appears, because the design is laid aside. "This false feint of wisdom," says he, "is the ruin of business." The whole power of cunning is privative; to say nothing, and to do nothing, is the utmost of its reach. Yet men thus narrow by nature, and mean by art, are sometimes able to rise by the miscarriages of bravery and the openness of integrity; and by watching failures and snatching opportunities, obtain advantages which belong properly to higher characters.

No. 93. SATURDAY, JANUARY 26, 1760

SAM SOFTLY was bred a sugar-baker; but succeeding to a considerable estate on the death of his elder brother, he retired early from business, married a fortune, and settled in a country-house near Kentish-town. Sam, who formerly was a sportsman, and in his apprenticeship used to frequent Barnet races, keeps a high chaise, with a brace of seasoned geldings. During the summer months, the principal passion and employment of Sam's life is to visit, in this vehicle, the most eminent seats of the nobility and gentry in different parts of the kingdom, with his wife and some select friends. By these periodical excursions Sam gratifies many important purposes. He assists the several pregnancies of his

wife; he shows his chaise to the best advantage; he indulges his insatiable curiosity for finery, which, since he has turned gentleman, has grown upon him to an extraordinary degree; he discovers taste and spirit, and, what is above all, he finds frequent opportunities of displaying to the party, at every house he sees, his knowledge of family connexion. At first, Sam was contented with driving a friend between London and his villa. Here he prided himself in pointing out the boxes of the citizens on each side of the road, with an accurate detail of their respective failures or successes in trade; and harangued on the several equipages that were accidentally passing. Here, too, the seats, interspersed on the surrounding hills, afforded ample matter for Sam's curious discoveries. For one, he told his companion, a rich Jew had offered money; and that a retired widow was courted at another, by an eminent dry-salter. At the same time he discussed the utility, and enumerated the expenses, of the Islington turnpike. But Sam's ambition is at present raised to nobler undertakings.

When the happy hour of the annual expedition arrives, the seat of the chaise is furnished with Ogilvy's Book of Roads, and a choice quantity of cold tongues. The most alarming disaster which can happen to our hero, who thinks he *throws a whip* admirably well, is to be overtaken in a road which affords no *quarter* for wheels. Indeed, few men possess more skill or discernment for concerting and conducting a *party of pleasure*. When a seat is to be surveyed, he has a peculiar talent in selecting some

shady bench in the park, where the company may most commodiously refresh themselves with cold tongue, chicken and French rolls; and is very sagacious in discovering what cool temple in the garden will be best adapted for drinking tea, brought for this purpose, in the afternoon, and from which the chaise may be resumed with the greatest convenience. In viewing the house itself, he is principally attracted by the chairs and beds, concerning the cost of which his minute inquiries generally gain the clearest information. An agate table easily diverts his eyes from the most capital strokes of Rubens, and a Turkey carpet has more charms than a Titian. Sam, however, dwells with some attention on the family portraits, particularly the most modern ones; and as this is a topick on which the housekeeper usually harangues in a more copious manner, he takes this opportunity of improving his knowledge of intermarriages. Yet, notwithstanding this appearance of satisfaction, Sam has some objection to all he sees. One house has too much gilding; at another, the chimney-pieces are all monuments; at a third, he conjectures that the beautiful canal must certainly be dried up in a hot summer. He despises the statues at Wilton, because he thinks he can see much better carving in Westminster Abbey. But there is one general objection which he is sure to make at almost every house, particularly at those which are most distinguished. He allows that all the apartments are extremely fine, but adds, with a sneer, that they are too fine to be inhabited.

Misapplied genius most commonly proves ridiculous. Had Sam, as Nature intended, contentedly continued in the calmer and less conspicuous pursuits of sugar-baking, he might have been a respectable and useful character. At present he dissipates his life in a specious idleness, which neither improves himself nor his friends. Those talents, which might have benefited society, he exposes to contempt by false pretensions. He affects pleasures which he cannot enjoy, and is acquainted only with those subjects on which he has no right to talk, and which it is no merit to understand[i].

No. 94. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1760

IT is common to find young men ardent and diligent in the pursuit of knowledge; but the progress of life very often produces laxity and indifference; and not only those who are at liberty to choose their business and amusements, but those likewise whose professions engage them in literary inquiries, pass the latter part of their time without improvement, and spend the day rather in any other entertainment than that which they might find among their books.

This abatement of the vigour of curiosity is sometimes imputed to the insufficiency of learning. Men are supposed to remit their labours, because they find their labours to have been vain; and to search

[i] This humorous paper was written by Mr. Thomas Warton, who is said to have sketched from a character in real life, distantly related to himself.—Drake's Essays, Vol. II.

no longer after truth and wisdom, because they at last despair of finding them.

But this reason is, for the most part, very falsely assigned. Of learning, as of virtue, it may be affirmed, that it is at once honoured and neglected. Whoever forsakes it will for ever look after it with longing, lament the loss which he does not endeavour to repair, and desire the good which he wants resolution to seize and keep. The Idler never applauds his own idleness, nor does any man repent of the diligence of his youth.

So many hindrances may obstruct the acquisition of knowledge, that there is little reason for wondering that it is in a few hands. To the greater part of mankind the duties of life are inconsistent with much study; and the hours which they would spend upon letters must be stolen from their occupations and their families. Many suffer themselves to be lured by more sprightly and luxurious pleasures from the shades of contemplation, where they find seldom more than a calm delight, such as, though greater than all others, its certainty and its duration being reckoned with its power of gratification, is yet easily quitted for some extemporary joy, which the present moment offers, and another, perhaps, will put out of reach.

It is the great excellence of learning, that it borrows very little from time or place; it is not confined to season or to climate, to cities or to the country, but may be cultivated and enjoyed where no other pleasure can be obtained. But this quality, which

constitutes much of its value, is one occasion of neglect; what may be done at all times with equal propriety, is deferred from day to day, till the mind is gradually reconciled to the omission, and the attention is turned to other objects. Thus habitual idleness gains too much power to be conquered, and the soul shrinks from the idea of intellectual labour and intenseness of meditation.

That those who profess to advance learning sometimes obstruct it, cannot be denied; the continual multiplication of books not only distracts choice, but disappoints inquiry. To him that has moderately stored his mind with images, few writers afford any novelty; or what little they have to add to the common stock of learning, is so buried in the mass of general notions, that, like silver mingled with the ore of lead, it is too little to pay for the labour of separation; and he that has often been deceived by the promise of a title, at last grows weary of examining, and is tempted to consider all as equally fallacious.

There are indeed some repetitions always lawful, because they never deceive. He that writes the history of past times, undertakes only to decorate known facts by new beauties of method or of style, or at most to illustrate them by his own reflections. The author of a system, whether moral or physical, is obliged to nothing beyond care of selection and regularity of disposition. But there are others who claim the name of authors merely to disgrace it, and fill the world with volumes only to bury letters in their own rubbish. The traveller, who tells, in a

pompous folio, that he saw the Pantheon at Rome, and the Medicean Venus at Florence; the natural historian, who, describing the productions of a narrow island, recounts all that it has in common with every other part of the world; the collector of antiquities, that accounts every thing a curiosity which the ruins of Herculaneum happen to emit, though an instrument already shown in a thousand repositories, or a cup common to the ancients, the moderns and all mankind; may be justly censured as the persecutors of students, and the thieves of that time which never can be restored.

No. 95. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1760

TO THE IDLER.

MR. IDLER,

IT is, I think, universally agreed, that seldom any good is gotten by complaint; yet we find that few forbear to complain, but those who are afraid of being reproached as the authors of their own miseries. I hope, therefore, for the common permission to lay my case before you and your readers, by which I shall disburden my heart, though I cannot hope to receive either assistance or consolation.

I am a trader, and owe my fortune to frugality and industry. I began with little; but by the easy and obvious method of spending less than I gain, I have every year added something to my stock, and expect to have a seat in the common-council at the next election.

My wife, who was as prudent as myself, died six

years ago, and left me one son and one daughter, for whose sake I resolved never to marry again, and rejected the overtures of Mrs. Squeeze, the broker's widow, who had ten thousand pounds at her own disposal.

I bred my son at a school near Islington; and when he had learned arithmetick, and wrote a good hand, I took him into the shop, designing, in about ten years, to retire to Stratford or Hackney, and leave him established in the business.

For four years he was diligent and sedate, entered the shop before it was opened, and when it was shut, always examined the pins of the window. In any intermission of business it was his constant practice to peruse the leger. I had always great hopes of him, when I observed how sorrowfully he would shake his head over a bad debt, and how eagerly he would listen to me when I told him that he might at one time or other become an alderman.

We lived together with mutual confidence, till, unluckily, a visit was paid him by two of his school-fellows, who were placed, I suppose, in the army, because they were fit for nothing better: they came glittering in their military dress, accosted their old acquaintance, and invited him to a tavern, where, as I have been since informed, they ridiculed the meanness of commerce, and wondered how a youth of spirit could spend the prime of life behind a counter.

I did not suspect any mischief. I knew my son was never without money in his pocket, and was better able to pay his reckoning than his compan-

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ions; and expected to see him return triumphing in his own advantages, and congratulating himself that he was not one of those who expose their heads to a musket bullet for three shillings a day.

He returned sullen and thoughtful; I supposed him sorry for the hard fortune of his friends; and tried to comfort him, by saying that the war would soon be at an end, and that, if they had any honest occupation, half-pay would be a pretty help. He looked at me with indignation; and snatching up his candle, told me, as he went up stairs, that *he hoped to see a battle yet.*

Why he should hope to see a battle, I could not conceive, but let him go quietly to sleep away his folly. Next day he made two mistakes in the first bill, disobliged a customer by surly answers, and dated all his entries in the journal in a wrong month. At night he met his military companions again, came home late, and quarrelled with the maid.

From this fatal interview he has gradually lost all his laudable passions and desires. He soon grew useless in the shop, where, indeed, I did not willingly trust him any longer; for he often mistook the price of goods to his own loss, and once gave a promissory note instead of a receipt.

I did not know to what degree he was corrupted, till an honest tailor gave me notice that he had bespoke a laced suit, which was to be left for him at a house kept by the sister of one of my journeymen. I went to this clandestine lodging, and found, to my amazement, all the ornaments of a fine gentleman,

which I know not whether he has taken upon credit, or purchased with money subducted from the shop.

This detection has made him desperate. He now openly declares his resolution to be a gentleman; says that his soul is too great for a counting-house; ridicules the conversation of city taverns; talks of new plays, and boxes and ladies; gives duchesses for his toasts; carries silver, for readiness, in his waist-coat-pocket; and comes home at night in a chair, with such thunders at the door, as have more than once brought the watchmen from their stands.

Little expenses will not hurt us; and I could forgive a few juvenile frolicks, if he would be careful of the main; but his favourite topick is contempt of money, which, he says, is of no use but to be spent. Riches, without honour, he holds empty things; and once told me to my face, that wealthy plodders were only purveyors to men of spirit.

He is always impatient in the company of his old friends, and seldom speaks till he is warmed with wine; he then entertains us with accounts that we do not desire to hear, of intrigues among lords and ladies, and quarrels between officers of the guards; shows a miniature on his snuff-box, and wonders that any man can look upon the new dancer without rapture.

All this is very provoking; and yet all this might be borne, if the boy could support his pretensions. But, whatever he may think, he is yet far from the accomplishments which he has endeavoured to purchase at so dear a rate. I have watched him in pub-

lick places. He sneaks in like a man that knows he is where he should not be; he is proud to catch the slightest salutation, and often claims it when it is not intended. Other men receive dignity from dress, but my booby looks always more meanly for his finery. Dear Mr. Idler, tell him what must at last become of a fop, whom pride will not suffer to be a trader, and whom long habits in a shop forbid to be a gentleman.

I am, Sir, &c.

TIM WAINSCOT.

No. 96. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1760

** Qui se volet esse potentem,*
Animos domet ille feroces:
Nec victa libidine colla
Fœdis submittat habenis. BOETHIUS.

HACHO, a king of Lapland, was in his youth the most renowned of the Northern warriors. His martial achievements remain engraved on a pillar of flint in the rocks of Hanga, and are to this day solemnly carolled to the harp by the Laplanders, at the fires with which they celebrate their nightly festivities. Such was his intrepid spirit, that he ventured to pass the lake Vether to the isle of Wizards, where he descended alone into the dreary vault in which a magician had been kept bound for six ages, and read the Gothick characters inscribed on his brazen mace. His eye was so piercing, that, as ancient chronicles report, he could blunt the weapons of his enemies only by looking at them. At twelve years of age he

carried an iron vessel of a prodigious weight, for the length of five furlongs, in the presence of all the chiefs of his father's castle.

Nor was he less celebrated for his prudence and wisdom. Two of his proverbs are yet remembered and repeated among Laplanders. To express the vigilance of the Supreme Being, he was wont to say, "Odin's belt is always buckled." To show that the most prosperous condition of life is often hazardous, his lesson was, "When you slide on the smoothest ice, beware of pits beneath." He consoled his countrymen, when they were once preparing to leave the frozen deserts of Lapland, and resolved to seek some warmer climate, by telling them, that the Eastern nations, notwithstanding their boasted fertility, passed every night amidst the horrours of anxious apprehension, and were inexpressibly affrighted, and almost stunned, every morning, with the noise of the sun while he was rising.

His temperance and severity of manners were his chief praise. In his early years he never tasted wine; nor would he drink out of a painted cup. He constantly slept in his armour, with his spear in his hand; nor would he use a battle-axe whose handle was inlaid with brass. He did not, however, persevere in this contempt of luxury; nor did he close his days with honour.

One evening, after hunting the gulos or wild-dog, being bewildered in a solitary forest, and having passed the fatigues of the day without any interval of refreshment, he discovered a large store of honey

in the hollow of a pine. This was a dainty which he had never tasted before; and being at once faint and hungry, he fed greedily upon it. From this unusual and delicious repast he received so much satisfaction, that, at his return home, he commanded honey to be served up at his table every day. His palate, by degrees, became refined and vitiated; he began to lose his native relish for simple fare, and contracted a habit of indulging himself in delicacies; he ordered the delightful gardens of his castle to be thrown open, in which the most luscious fruits had been suffered to ripen and decay, unobserved and untouched, for many revolving autumns, and gratified his appetite with luxurious desserts. At length he found it expedient to introduce wine, as an agreeable improvement, or a necessary ingredient, to his new way of living; and having once tasted it, he was tempted, by little and little, to give a loose tc the excesses of intoxication. His general simplicity of life was changed; he perfumed his apartments by burning the wood of the most aromatick fir, and commanded his helmet to be ornamented with beautiful rows of the teeth of the rein deer. Indolence and effeminacy stole upon him by pleasing and imperceptible gradations, relaxed the sinews of his resolution, and extinguished his thirst of military glory.

While Hacho was thus immersed in pleasure and in repose, it was reported to him, one morning, that the preceding night, a disastrous omen had been discovered, and that bats and hideous birds had drunk

up the oil which nourished the perpetual lamp in the temple of Odin. About the same time, a messenger arrived to tell him, that the king of Norway had invaded his kingdom with a formidable army. Hacho, terrified as he was with the omen of the night, and enervated with indulgence, roused himself from his voluptuous lethargy, and, recollecting some faint and few sparks of veteran valour, marched forward to meet him. Both armies joined battle in the forest where Hacho had been lost after hunting; and it so happened, that the king of Norway challenged him to single combat, near the place where he had tasted the honey. The Lapland chief, languid and long disused to arms, was soon overpowered; he fell to the ground; and before his insulting adversary struck his head from his body, uttered this exclamation, which the Laplanders still use as an early lesson to their children: "The vicious man should date his destruction from the first temptation. How justly do I fall a sacrifice to sloth and luxury, in the place where I first yielded to those allurements which seduced me to deviate from temperance and innocence! The honey which I tasted in this forest, and not the hand of the king of Norway, conquers Hacho[j]."

No. 97. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1760

IT may, I think, be justly observed, that few books disappoint their readers more than the narrations of travellers. One part of mankind is naturally curi-

[j] By Mr. Thomas Warton.

ous to learn the sentiments, manners, and condition of the rest; and every mind that has leisure or power to extend its views, must be desirous of knowing in what proportion Providence has distributed the blessings of nature, or the advantages of art, among the several nations of the earth.

This general desire easily procures readers to every book from which it can expect gratification. The adventurer upon unknown coasts, and the describer of distant regions, is always welcomed as a man who has laboured for the pleasure of others, and who is able to enlarge our knowledge and rectify our opinions; but when the volume is opened, nothing is found but such general accounts as leave no distinct idea behind them, or such minute enumerations as few can read with either profit or delight.

Every writer of travels should consider, that, like all other authors, he undertakes either to instruct or please, or to mingle pleasure with instruction. He that instructs must offer to the mind something to be imitated, or something to be avoided; he that pleases must offer new images to his reader, and enable him to form a tacit comparison of his own state with that of others.

The greater part of travellers tell nothing, because their method of travelling supplies them with nothing to be told. He that enters a town at night, and surveys it in the morning, and then hastens away to another place, and guesses at the manners of the inhabitants by the entertainment which his inn afforded him, may please himself for a time with a

hasty change of scenes, and a confused remembrance of palaces and churches; he may gratify his eye with a variety of landscapes, and regale his palate with a succession of vintages; but let him be contented to please himself without endeavouring to disturb others. Why should he record excursions by which nothing could be learned, or wish to make a show of knowledge, which, without some power of intuition unknown to other mortals, he never could attain?

Of those who crowd the world with their itineraries, some have no other purpose than to describe the face of the country; those who sit idle at home, and are curious to know what is done or suffered in distant countries, may be informed by one of these wanderers, that on a certain day he set out early with the caravan, and in the first hour's march saw, towards the south, a hill covered with trees, then passed over a stream, which ran northward with a swift course, but which is probably dry in the summer months; that an hour after he saw something to the right which looked at a distance like a castle with towers, but which he discovered afterwards to be a craggy rock; that he then entered a valley, in which he saw several trees tall and flourishing, watered by a rivulet not marked in the maps, of which he was not able to learn the name; that the road afterwards grew stony, and the country uneven, where he observed among the hills many hollows worn by torrents, and was told that the road was passable only part of the year; that going on they

found the remains of a building, once, perhaps, a fortress to secure the pass, or to restrain the robbers, of which the present inhabitants can give no other account than that it is haunted by fairies; that they went to dine at the foot of a rock, and travelled the rest of the day along the banks of a river, from which the road turned aside towards evening, and brought them within sight of a village, which was once a considerable town, but which afforded them neither good victuals nor commodious lodging.

Thus he conducts his reader through wet and dry, over rough and smooth, without incidents, without reflection; and, if he obtains his company for another day, will dismiss him again at night, equally fatigued with a like succession of rocks and streams, mountains and ruins.

This is the common style of those sons of enterprise, who visit savage countries, and range through solitude and desolation; who pass a desert, and tell that it is sandy; who cross a valley, and find that it is green. There are others of more delicate sensibility, that visit only the realms of elegance and softness; that wander through Italian palaces, and amuse the gentle reader with catalogues of pictures; that hear masses in magnificent churches, and recount the number of the pillars or variegations of the pavement. And there are yet others, who, in disdain of trifles, copy inscriptions elegant and rude, ancient and modern; and transcribe into their book the walls of every edifice, sacred or civil. He that reads these books must consider his labour as its own reward;

for he will find nothing on which attention can fix, or which memory can retain.

He that would travel for the entertainment of others, should remember that the great object of remark is human life. Every nation has something peculiar in its manufactures, its works of genius, its medicines, its agriculture, its customs and its policy. He only is a useful traveller, who brings home something by which his country may be benefited; who procures some supply of want, or some mitigation of evil, which may enable his readers to compare their condition with that of others, to improve it whenever it is worse, and whenever it is better to enjoy it.

No. 98. SATURDAY, MARCH 1, 1760

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

I AM the daughter of a gentleman, who during his lifetime enjoyed a small income which arose from a pension from the court, by which he was enabled to live in a genteel and comfortable manner.

By the situation of life in which he was placed, he was frequently introduced into the company of those of much greater fortunes than his own, among whom he was always received with complaisance, and treated with civility.

At six years of age I was sent to a boarding-school in the country, at which I continued till my father's death. This melancholy event happened at a time when I was by no means of sufficient age to manage for myself, while the passions of youth

continued unsubdued, and before experience could guide my sentiments or my actions.

I was then taken from school by an uncle, to the care of whom my father had committed me on his dying-bed. With him I lived several years; and, as he was unmarried, the management of his family was committed to me. In this character I always endeavoured to acquit myself, if not with applause, at least without censure.

At the age of twenty-one, a young gentleman of some fortune paid his addresses to me, and offered me terms of marriage. This proposal I should readily have accepted, because from vicinity of residence, and from many opportunities of observing his behaviour, I had, in some sort, contracted an affection for him. My uncle, for what reason I do not know, refused his consent to this alliance, though it would have been complied with by the father of the young gentleman; and, as the future condition of my life was wholly dependant on him, I was not willing to disoblige him, and, therefore, though unwillingly, declined the offer.

My uncle, who possessed a plentiful fortune, frequently hinted to me in conversation, that at his death I should be provided for in such a manner that I should be able to make my future life comfortable and happy. As this promise was often repeated, I was the less anxious about any provision for myself. In a short time my uncle was taken ill, and though all possible means were made use of for his recovery, in a few days he died.

The sorrow arising from the loss of a relation, by whom I had been always treated with the greatest kindness, however grievous, was not the worst of my misfortunes. As he enjoyed an almost uninterrupted state of health, he was the less mindful of his dissolution, and died intestate; by which means his whole fortune devolved to a nearer relation, the heir at law.

Thus excluded from all hopes of living in the manner with which I have so long flattered myself, I am doubtful what method I shall take to procure a decent maintenance. I have been educated in a manner that has set me above a state of servitude, and my situation renders me unfit for the company of those with whom I have hitherto conversed. But, though dissappointed in my expectations, I do not despair. I will hope that assistance may still be obtained for innocent distress, and that friendship, though rare, is yet not impossible to be found.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

SOPHIA HEEDFUL[k].

No. 99. SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 1760

AS Ortogrul of Basra was one day wandering along the streets of Bagdat, musing on the varieties of merchandise which the shops offered to his view, and observing the different occupations which busied the multitudes on every side, he was awakened from the tranquillity of meditation by a crowd that

[k] By an unknown correspondent.

obstructed his passage. He raised his eyes, and saw the chief visier, who, having returned from the divan, was entering his palace.

Ortogrul mingled with the attendants, and being supposed to have some petition for the visier, was permitted to enter. He surveyed the spaciousness of the apartments, admired the walls hung with golden tapestry, and the floors covered with silken carpets, and despised the simple neatness of his own little habitation.

Surely, said he to himself, this palace is the seat of happiness, where pleasure succeeds to pleasure, and discontent and sorrow can have no admission. Whatever Nature has provided for the delight of sense, is here spread forth to be enjoyed. What can mortals hope or imagine, which the master of this palace has not obtained? The dishes of luxury cover his table, the voice of harmony lulls him in his bowers; he breathes the fragrance of the groves of Java, and sleeps upon the down of the cygnets of Ganges. He speaks, and his mandate is obeyed; he wishes, and his wish is gratified; all whom he sees obey him, and all whom he hears flatter him. How different, Ortogrul, is thy condition, who are doomed to the perpetual torments of unsatisfied desire, and who hast no amusement in thy power that can withhold thee from thy own reflections! They tell thee that thou art wise; but what does wisdom avail with poverty? None will flatter the poor, and the wise have very little power of flattering themselves. That man is surely the most wretched of the sons of

wretchedness, who lives with his own faults and follies always before him, and who has none to reconcile him to himself by praise and veneration. I have long sought content, and have not found it; I will from this moment endeavour to be rich.

Full of this new resolution, he shut himself up in his chamber for six months, to deliberate how he should grow rich; he sometimes proposed to offer himself as a counsellor to one of the kings of India, and sometimes resolved to dig for diamonds in the mines of Golconda. One day, after some hours passed in violent fluctuation of opinion, sleep insensibly seized him in his chair; he dreamed that he was ranging a desert country in search of some one that might teach him to grow rich; and as he stood on the top of a hill shaded with cypress, in doubt whither to direct his steps, his father appeared on a sudden standing before him. Ortogrul, said the old man, I know thy perplexity; listen to thy father; turn thine eye on the opposite mountain. Ortogrul looked, and saw a torrent tumbling down the rocks, roaring with the noise of thunder, and scattering its foam on the impending woods. Now, said his father, behold the valley that lies between the hills. Ortogrul looked, and espied a little well, out of which issued a small rivulet. Tell me now, said his father, dost thou wish for sudden affluence, that may pour upon thee like the mountain torrent, or for a slow and gradual increase, resembling the rill gliding from the well? Let me be quickly rich, said Ortogrul; let the golden stream be quick and violent. Look round

thee, said his father, once again. Ortogrul looked, and perceived the channel of the torrent dry and dusty; but following the rivulet from the well, he traced it to a wide lake, which the supply, slow and constant, kept always full. He waked, and determined to grow rich by silent profit and persevering industry.

Having sold his patrimony, he engaged in merchandise, and in twenty years purchased lands, on which he raised a house, equal in sumptuousness to that of the visier, to which he invited all the ministers of pleasure, expecting to enjoy all the felicity which he had imagined riches able to afford. Leisure soon made him weary of himself, and he longed to be persuaded that he was great and happy. He was courteous and liberal; he gave all that approached him hopes of pleasing him, and all who should please him hopes of being rewarded. Every art of praise was tried, and every source of adulatory fiction was exhausted. Ortogrul heard his flatterers without delight, because he found himself unable to believe them. His own heart told him its frailties, his own understanding reproached him with his faults. How long, said he, with a deep sigh, have I been labouring in vain to amass wealth which at last is useless! Let no man hereafter wish to be rich, who is already too wise to be flattered.

No. 100. SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 1760

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

THE uncertainty and defects of language have produced very frequent complaints among the learned; yet there still remain many words among us undefined, which are very necessary to be rightly understood, and which produce very mischievous mistakes when they are erroneously interpreted.

I lived in a state of celibacy beyond the usual time. In the hurry first of pleasure, and afterwards of business, I felt no want of a domestick companion; but becoming weary of labour, I soon grew more weary of idleness, and thought it reasonable to follow the custom of life, and to seek some solace of my cares in female tenderness, and some amusement of my leisure in female cheerfulness.

The choice which has been long delayed is commonly made at last with great caution. My resolution was, to keep my passions neutral, and to marry only in compliance with my reason. I drew upon a page of my pocket-book a scheme of all female virtues and vices, with the vices which border upon every virtue, and the virtues which are allied to every vice. I considered that wit was sarcastick, and magnanimity imperious; that avarice was economical, and ignorance obsequious; and having estimated the good and evil of every quality, employed my own diligence, and that of my friends, to find the lady in whom nature and reason had reached that happy

mediocrity which is equally remote from exuberance and deficience.

Every woman had her admirers and her censurers; and the expectations which one raised were by another quickly depressed; yet there was one in whose favour almost all suffrages concurred. Miss Gentle was universally allowed to be a good sort of woman. Her fortune was not large, but so prudently managed, that she wore finer clothes, and saw more company, than many who were known to be twice as rich. Miss Gentle's visits were every where welcome; and whatever family she favoured with her company, she always left behind her such a degree of kindness as recommended her to others. Every day extended her acquaintance; and all who knew her declared, that they never met with a better sort of woman.

To Miss Gentle I made my addresses, and was received with great equality of temper. She did not in the days of courtship assume the privilege of imposing rigorous commands, or resenting slight offences. If I forgot any of her injunctions, I was gently reminded; if I missed the minute of appointment, I was easily forgiven. I foresaw nothing in marriage but a halcyon calm, and longed for the happiness which was to be found in the inseparable society of a good sort of woman.

The jointure was soon settled by the intervention of friends, and the day came in which Miss Gentle was made mine for ever. The first month was passed easily enough in receiving and repaying the civilities

of our friends. The bride practised with great exactness all the niceties of ceremony, and distributed her notice in the most punctilious proportions to the friends who surrounded us with their happy auguries.

But the time soon came when we were left to ourselves, and were to receive our pleasures from each other; and I then began to perceive that I was not formed to be much delighted by a good sort of woman. Her great principle is, that the orders of a family must not be broken. Every hour of the day has its employment inviolably appropriated; nor will any importunity persuade her to walk in the garden at the time which she has devoted to her needlework, or to sit up stairs in that part of the forenoon which she has accustomed herself to spend in the back parlour. She allows herself to sit half an hour after breakfast, and an hour after dinner; while I am talking or reading to her, she keeps her eye upon her watch, and when the minute of departure comes, will leave an argument unfinished, or the intrigue of a play unravelled. She once called me to supper when I was watching an eclipse, and summoned me at another time to bed when I was going to give directions at a fire.

Her conversation is so habitually cautious, that she never talks to me but in general terms, as to one whom it is dangerous to trust. For discriminations of character she has no names: all whom she mentions are honest men and agreeable women. She smiles not by sensation, but by practice. Her laughter is never excited but by a joke, and her notion of a

joke is not very delicate. The repetition of a good joke does not weaken its effect; if she has laughed once, she will laugh again.

She is an enemy to nothing but ill-nature and pride; but she has frequent reason to lament that they are so frequent in the world. All who are not equally pleased with the good and the bad, with the elegant and gross, with the witty and the dull, all who distinguish excellence from defect, she considers as ill-natured; and she condemns as proud all who repress impertinence or quell presumption, or expect respect from any other eminence than that of fortune, to which she is always willing to pay homage.

There are none whom she openly hates, for if once she suffers, or believes herself to suffer, any contempt or insult, she never dismisses it from her mind, but takes all opportunities to tell how easily she can forgive. There are none whom she loves much better than others; for when any of her acquaintance decline in the opinion of the world, she always finds it inconvenient to visit them; her affection continues unaltered, but it is impossible to be intimate with the whole town.

She daily exercises her benevolence by pitying every misfortune that happens to every family within her circle of notice; she is in hourly terrours lest one should catch cold in the rain, and another be frighted by the high wind. Her charity she shows by lamenting that so many poor wretches should languish in the streets, and by wondering what the great can think on that they do so little good with such large estates.

Her house is elegant, and her table dainty, though she has little taste of elegance, and is wholly free from vicious luxury; but she comforts herself that nobody can say that her house is dirty, or that her dishes are not well drest.

This, Mr. Idler, I have found, by long experience, to be the character of a good sort of woman, which I have sent you for the information of those by whom a *good sort of woman* and a *good woman*, may happen to be used as equivalent terms, and who may suffer by the mistake, like

Your humble servant,

TIM WARNER.

No. 101. SATURDAY, MARCH *22*, 1760

**Carpe hilaris: fugit heu! non revocanda dies.*

OMAR, the son of Hussan, had passed seventy-five years in honour and prosperity. The favour of three successive califs had filled his house with gold and silver; and, whenever he appeared, the benedictions of the people proclaimed his passage.

Terrestrial happiness is of short continuance. The brightness of the flame is wasting its fuel; the fragrant flower is passing away in its own odours. The vigour of Omar began to fail, the curls of beauty fell from his head, strength departed from his hands, and agility from his feet. He gave back to the calif the keys of trust and the seals of secrecy; and sought no other pleasure for the remains of life than the converse of the wise, and the gratitude of the good.

The powers of his mind were yet unimpaired. His

chamber was filled by visitants, eager to catch the dictates of experience, and officious to pay the tribute of admiration. Caled, the son of the viceroy of Egypt, entered every day early, and retired late. He was beautiful and eloquent; Omar admired his wit, and loved his docility. Tell me, said Caled, thou to whose voice nations have listened, and whose wisdom is known to the extremities of Asia, tell me how I may resemble Omar the prudent. The arts by which you have gained power and preserved it, are to you no longer necessary or useful; impart to me the secret of your conduct, and teach me the plan upon which your wisdom has built your fortune.

Young man, said Omar, it is of little use to form plans of life. When I took my first survey of the world, in my twentieth year, having considered the various conditions of mankind, in the hour of solitude I said thus to myself, leaning against a cedar which spread its branches over my head: Seventy years are allowed to man; I have yet fifty remaining: ten years I will allot to the attainment of knowledge, and ten I will pass in foreign countries; I shall be learned, and, therefore, shall be honoured; every city will shout at my arrival, and every student will solicit my friendship. Twenty years thus passed will store my mind with images, which I shall be busy through the rest of my life in combining and comparing. I shall revel in inexhaustible accumulations of intellectual riches; I shall find new pleasures for every moment, and shall never more be weary of myself. I will, however, not deviate too far from

the beaten track of life, but will try what can be found in female delicacy. I will marry a wife beautiful as the Houries, and wise as Zobeide; with her I will live twenty years within the suburbs of Bagdat, in every pleasure that wealth can purchase and fancy can invent. I will then retire to a rural dwelling, pass my last days in obscurity and contemplation, and lie silently down on the bed of death. Through my life it shall be my settled resolution, that I will never depend upon the smile of princes; that I will never stand exposed to the artifices of courts; I will never pant for publick honours, nor disturb my quiet with affairs of state. Such was my scheme of life, which I impressed indelibly upon my memory.

The first part of my ensuing time was to be spent in search of knowledge; and I know not how I was diverted from my design. I had no visible impediments without, nor any ungovernable passions within. I regarded knowledge as the highest honour and the most engaging pleasure; yet day stole upon day, and month glided after month, till I found that seven years of the first ten had vanished, and left nothing behind them. I now postponed my purpose of travelling; for why should I go abroad while so much remained to be learned at home? I immured myself for four years, and studied the laws of the empire. The fame of my skill reached the judges; I was found able to speak upon doubtful questions, and was commanded to stand at the footstool of the calif. I was heard with attention, I was consulted with confidence, and the love of praise fastened on my heart.

I still wished to see distant countries, listened with rapture to the relations of travellers, and resolved some time to ask my dismission, that I might feast my soul with novelty; but my presence was always necessary, and the stream of business hurried me along. Sometimes I was afraid lest I should be charged with ingratitude; but I still proposed to travel, and, therefore, would not confine myself by marriage.

In my fiftieth year I began to suspect that the time of travelling was past, and thought it best to lay hold on the felicity yet in my power, and indulge myself in domestick pleasures. But at fifty no man easily finds a woman beautiful as the Houries, and wise as Zobeide. I inquired and rejected, consulted and deliberated, till the sixty-second year made me ashamed of gazing upon girls. I had now nothing left but retirement, and for retirement I never found a time, till disease forced me from publick employment.

Such was my scheme, and such has been its consequence. With an insatiable thirst for knowledge, I trifled away the years of improvement; with a restless desire of seeing different countries, I have always resided in the same city; with the highest expectation of connubial felicity, I have lived unmarried; and with unalterable resolutions of contemplative retirement, I am going to die within the walls of Bagdat.

THE IDLER

No. 102. SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 1760

IT very seldom happens to man that his business is his pleasure. What is done from necessity is so often to be done when against the present inclination, and so often fills the mind with anxiety, that an habitual dislike steals upon us, and we shrink involuntarily from the remembrance of our task. This is the reason why almost every one wishes to quit his employment; he does not like another state, but is disgusted with his own.

From this unwillingness to perform more than is required of that which is commonly performed with reluctance, it proceeds that few authors write their own lives. Statesmen, courtiers, ladies, generals and seamen have given to the world their own stories, and the events with which their different stations have made them acquainted. They retired to the closet as to a place of quiet and amusement, and pleased themselves with writing, because they could lay down the pen whenever they were weary. But the author, however conspicuous, or however important, either in the publick eye or in his own, leaves his life to be related by his successors, for he cannot gratify his vanity but by sacrificing his ease.

It is commonly supposed that the uniformity of a studious life affords no matter for a narration: but the truth is, that of the most studious life a great part passes without study. An author partakes of the common condition of humanity; he is born and married like another man; he has hopes and fears,

expectations and disappointments, griefs and joys, and friends and enemies, like a courtier or a statesman; nor can I conceive why his affairs should not excite curiosity as much as the whisper of a drawing-room or the factions of a camp.

Nothing detains the reader's attention more powerfully than deep involutions of distress, or sudden vicissitudes of fortune; and these might be abundantly afforded by memoirs of the sons of literature. They are entangled by contracts which they know not how to fulfil, and obliged to write on subjects which they do not understand. Every publication is a new period of time, from which some increase or declension of fame is to be reckoned. The gradations of a hero's life are from battle to battle, and of an author's from book to book.

Success and miscarriage have the same effects in all conditions. The prosperous are feared, hated and flattered; and the unfortunate avoided, pitied and despised. No sooner is a book published than the writer may judge of the opinion of the world. If his acquaintance press round him in publick places, or salute him from the other side of the street; if invitations to dinner come thick upon him, and those with whom he dines keep him to supper; if the ladies turn to him when his coat is plain, and the footmen serve him with attention and alacrity; he may be sure that his work has been praised by some leader of literary fashions.

Of declining reputation the symptoms are not less easily observed. If the author enters a coffee-house,

he has a box to himself; if he calls at a bookseller's, the boy turns his back; and, what is the most fatal of all prognosticks, authors will visit him in a morning, and talk to him hour after hour of the malevolence of criticks, the neglect of merit, the bad taste of the age and the candour of posterity.

All this, modified and varied by accident and custom, would form very amusing scenes of biography, and might recreate many a mind which is very little delighted with conspiracies of battles, intrigues of a court, or debates of a parliament; to this might be added all the changes of the countenance of a patron, traced from the first glow which flattery raises in his cheek, through ardour of fondness, vehemence of promise, magnificence of praise, excuse of delay, and lamentation of inability, to the last chill look of final dismission, when the one grows weary of soliciting, and the other of hearing solicitation.

Thus copious are the materials which have been hitherto suffered to lie neglected, while the repositories of every family that has produced a soldier or a minister are ransacked, and libraries are crowded with the useless folios of state-papers which will never be read, and which contribute nothing to valuable knowledge.

I hope the learned will be taught to know their own strength and their value, and, instead of devoting their lives to the honour of those who seldom thank them for their labours, resolve at last to do justice to themselves.

No. 103. SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 1760

Respicere ad longæ jussit spatia ultima vitæ. Juv. Sat. x. 275.

MUCH of the pain and pleasure of mankind arises from the conjectures which every one makes of the thoughts of others; we all enjoy praise which we do not hear, and resent contempt which we do not see. The Idler may, therefore, be forgiven, if he suffers his imagination to represent to him what his readers will say or think when they are informed that they have now his last paper in their hands.

Value is more frequently raised by scarcity than by use. That which lay neglected when it was common, rises in estimation as its quantity becomes less. We seldom learn the true want of what we have till it is discovered that we can have no more.

This essay will, perhaps, be read with care even by those who have not yet attended to any other; and he that finds this late attention recompensed, will not forbear to wish that he had bestowed it sooner.

Though the Idler and his readers have contracted no close friendship, they are, perhaps, both unwilling to part. There are few things not purely evil, of which we can say, without some emotion of uneasiness, *this is the last.* Those who never could agree together, shed tears when mutual discontent has determined them to final separation; of a place which has been frequently visited, though without pleasure, the last look is taken with heaviness of heart; and the Idler, with all his chilness of tranquillity,

is not wholly unaffected by the thought that his last essay is now before him.

The secret horrour of the last is inseparable from a thinking being, whose life is limited, and to whom death is dreadful. We always make a secret comparison between a part and the whole; the termination of any period of life reminds us that life itself has likewise its termination; when we have done any thing for the last time, we involuntarily reflect that a part of the days allotted us is past, and that as more is past there is less remaining.

It is very happily and kindly provided, that in every life there are certain pauses and interruptions, which force consideration upon the careless, and seriousness upon the light; points of time where one course of action ends, and another begins; and by vicissitudes of fortune or alteration of employment, by change of place or loss of friendship, we are forced to say of something, *this is the last.*

An even and unvaried tenour of life always hides from our apprehension the approach of its end. Succession is not perceived but by variation; he that lives to-day as he lived yesterday, and expects that, as the present day is, such will be the morrow, easily conceives time as running in a circle and returning to itself. The uncertainty of our duration is impressed commonly by dissimilitude of condition; it is only by finding life changeable that we are reminded of its shortness.

This conviction, however forcible at every new impression, is every moment fading from the mind;

and partly by the inevitable incursion of new images, and partly by voluntary exclusion of unwelcome thoughts, we are again exposed to the universal fallacy; and we must do another thing for the last time, before we consider that the time is nigh when we shall do no more.

As the last Idler is published in that solemn week which the Christian world has always set apart for the examination of the conscience, the review of life, the extinction of earthly desires, and the renovation of holy purposes; I hope that my readers are already disposed to view every incident with seriousness, and improve it by meditation; and that, when they see this series of trifles brought to a conclusion, they will consider that, by out-living the Idler, they have passed weeks, months and years, which are now no longer in their power; that an end must in time be put to every thing great as to every thing little; that to life must come its last hour, and to this system of being its last day, the hour at which probation ceases, and repentance will be vain; the day in which every work of the hand, and imagination of the heart shall be brought to judgment, and an everlasting futurity shall be determined by the past[1].

[1] This most solemn and impressive paper may be profitably compared with the introduction of Bishop Heber's first Bampton-Lecture.

Painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds P.R.A.

JAMES BEATTIE

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THE IDLER. No. 22[m].

MANY naturalists are of opinion, that the animals which we commonly consider as mute, have the power of imparting their thoughts to one another. That they can express general sensations is very certain; every being that can utter sounds, has a different voice for pleasure and for pain. The hound informs his fellows when he scents his game; the hen calls her chickens to their food by her cluck, and drives them from danger by her scream.

Birds have the greatest variety of notes; they have, indeed, a variety, which seems almost sufficient to make a speech adequate to the purposes of a life which is regulated by instinct, and can admit little change or improvement. To the cries of birds, curiosity or superstition has been always attentive; many have studied the language of the feathered tribes, and some have boasted that they understood it.

The most skilful or most confident interpreters of the sylvan dialogues have been commonly found among the philosophers of the east, in a country where the calmness of the air, and the mildness of the seasons, allow the student to pass a great part of the year in groves and bowers. But what may be done in one place by peculiar opportunities, may be performed in another by peculiar diligence. A shepherd of Bohemia has, by long abode in the forests, enabled himself to understand the voice of

[m]This was the original No. 22, but on the republication of the work in volumes, Dr. Johnson substituted what now stands under that head.

birds; at least he relates with great confidence a story, of which the credibility is left to be considered by the learned.

"As I was sitting," said he, "within a hollow rock, and watching my sheep that fed in the valley, I heard two vultures interchangeably crying on the summit of the cliff. Both voices were earnest and deliberate. My curiosity prevailed over my care of the flock; I climbed slowly and silently from crag to crag, concealed among the shrubs, till I found a cavity where I might sit and listen without suffering or giving disturbance."

"I soon perceived, that my labour would be well repaid; for an old vulture was sitting on a naked prominence, with her young about her, whom she was instructing in the arts of a vulture's life, and preparing, by the last lecture, for their final dismission to the mountains and the skies."

"My children," said the old vulture, "you will the less want my instructions, because you have had my practice before your eyes; you have seen me snatch from the farm the household fowl; you have seen me seize the leveret in the bush, and the kid in the pasture; you know how to fix your talons, and how to balance your flight when you are laden with your prey. But you remember the taste of more delicious food; I have often regaled you with the flesh of man." "Tell us," said the young vultures, "where man may be found, and how he may be known; his flesh is surely the natural food of a vulture. Why have you never brought a man in your

talons to the nest?" "He is too bulky," said the mother; "when we find a man, we can only tear away his flesh, and leave his bones upon the ground." "Since man is so big," said the young ones, "how do you kill him? You are afraid of the wolf and of the bear, by what power are vultures superior to man? is man more defenceless than a sheep?" "We have not the strength of man," returned the mother, "and I am sometimes in doubt whether we have the subtilty; and the vultures would seldom feast upon his flesh, had not nature, that devoted him to our uses, infused into him a strange ferocity, which I have never observed in any other being that feeds upon the earth. Two herds of men will often meet and shake the earth with noise, and fill the air with fire. When you hear noise and see fire, with flashes along the ground, hasten to the place with your swiftest wing, for men are surely destroying one another; you will then find the ground smoking with blood, and covered with carcasses, of which many are dismembered and mangled for the convenience of the vulture." "But when men have killed their prey," said the pupil, "why do they not eat it? When the wolf has killed a sheep, he suffers not the vulture to touch it till he has satisfied himself. Is not man another kind of wolf?" "Man," said the mother, "is the only beast who kills that which he does not devour, and this quality makes him so much a benefactor to our species." "If men kill our prey and lay it in our way," said the young one, "what need shall we have of labouring for ourselves?"

"Because man will, sometimes," replied the mother, "remain for a long time quiet in his den. The old vultures will tell you when you are to watch his motions. When you see men in great numbers moving close together, like a flock of storks, you may conclude that they are hunting, and that you will soon revel in human blood." "But still," said the young one, "I would gladly know the reason of this mutual slaughter. I could never kill what I could not eat." "My child," said the mother, "this is a question which I cannot answer, though I am reckoned the most subtle bird of the mountain. When I was young, I used frequently to visit the aerie of an old vulture, who dwelt upon the Carpathian rocks; he had made many observations; he knew the places that afforded prey round his habitation, as far in every direction as the strongest wing can fly between the rising and setting of the summer sun; he had fed year after year on the entrails of men. His opinion was, that men had only the appearance of animal life, being really vegetables with a power of motion; and that as the boughs of an oak are dashed together by the storm, that swine may fatten upon the fallen acorns, so men are by some unaccountable power driven one against another, till they lose their motion, that vultures may be fed. Others think they have observed something of contrivance and policy among these mischievous beings; and those that hover more closely round them, pretend, that there is, in every herd, one that gives directions to the rest, and seems to

be more eminently delighted with a wide carnage. What it is that entitles him to such pre-eminence we know not; he is seldom the biggest or the swiftest, but he shows by his eagerness and diligence that he is, more than any of the others, a friend to the vultures.''

LONDON; A POEM

IN IMITATION OF THE THIRD SATIRE OF JUVENAL

WRITTEN IN 1738

——————Quis ineptæ
Tam patiens urbis, tam ferreus ut teneat se? Juv.

[n]THOUGH grief and fondness in my breast rebel,
When injur'd Thales bids the town farewell,
Yet still my calmer thoughts his choice commend,
I praise the hermit, but regret the friend;
Resolv'd at length, from vice and London far,
To breathe, in distant fields, a purer air,
And, fix'd on Cambria's solitary shore,
Give to St. David one true Briton more.
[o]For who would leave, unbrib'd, Hibernia's land,
Or change the rocks of Scotland for the Strand?
There none are swept by sudden fate away,
But all, whom hunger spares, with age decay:
Here malice, rapine, accident, conspire,
And now a rabble rages, now a fire;
Their ambush here relentless ruffians lay,
And here the fell attorney prowls for prey;

JUV. SAT. III.

[n] Quamvis digressu veteris confusus amici,
Laudo, tamen, vacuis quod sedem figere Cumis
Destinet atque unum civem donare Sibyllæ.

[o] — Ego vel Prochytam præpono Suburæ.
Nam quid tam miserum, tam solum vidimus, ut non
Deterius credas horrere incendia, lapsus
Tectorum assiduos, ac mille pericula sævæ
Urbis et Augusto recitantes mense poetas?

Here falling houses thunder on your head,
And here a female atheist talks you dead.
[p]While Thales waits the wherry, that contains
Of dissipated wealth the small remains,
On Thames's banks, in silent thought, we stood
Where Greenwich smiles upon the silver flood;
Struck with the seat that gave Eliza* birth,
We kneel, and kiss the consecrated earth;
In pleasing dreams the blissful age renew,
And call Britannia's glories back to view;
Behold her cross triumphant on the main,
The guard of commerce, and the dread of Spain,
Ere masquerades debauch'd, excise oppress'd
Or English honour grew a standing jest.
A transient calm the happy scenes bestow,
And, for a moment, lull the sense of woe.
At length awaking, with contemptuous frown,
Indignant Thales eyes the neighb'ring town.
[q]Since worth, he cries, in these degen'rate days,
Wants ev'n the cheap reward of empty praise;
In those curs'd walls, devote to vice and gain,
Since unrewarded science toils in vain;
Since hope but sooths to double my distress,
And ev'ry moment leaves my little less;

[p] Sed dum tota domus reda componitur una,
Substitit ad veteres arcus——

[q] Hic tunc Umbricius; Quando artibus, inquit, honestis
Nullus in urbe locus, nulla emolumenta laborum,
Res hodie minor est, here quam fuit, atque eadem cras
Deteret exiguis aliquid: proponimus illuc
Ire, fatigatas ubi Dædalus exuit alas,
Dum nova canities,——

* Queen Elizabeth, born at Greenwich.

While yet my steady steps no [r]staff sustains,
And life, still vig'rous, revels in my veins;
Grant me, kind heaven, to find some happier place,
Where honesty and sense are no disgrace;
Some pleasing bank where verdant osiers play,
Some peaceful vale, with nature's paintings gay;
Where once the harass'd Briton found repose,
And, safe in poverty, defied his foes;
Some secret cell, ye pow'rs, indulgent give,
[s]Let——live here, for——has learn'd to live.
Here let those reign, whom pensions can incite
To vote a patriot black, a courtier white;
Explain their country's dear-bought rights away,
And plead for *pirates in the face of day;
With slavish tenets taint our poison'd youth,
And lend a lie the confidence of truth.
[t]Let such raise palaces, and manors buy,
Collect a tax, or farm a lottery;
With warbling eunuchs fill a †licens'd ‡stage,
And lull to servitude a thoughtless age.
Heroes, proceed! what bounds your pride shall hold,
What check restrain your thirst of pow'r and gold?

[r] ——et pedibus me
Porto meis, nullo dextram subeunte bacillo.
[s] Cedamus patria: vivant Artorius istic
Et Catulus: maneant, qui nigrum in candida vertunt.
[t] Queis facile est ædem conducere, flumina, portus,
Siccandam eluviem, portandum ad busta cadaver,——
Munera nunc edunt.

* The invasions of the Spaniards were defended in the house of parliament.

† The licensing act was then lately made. ‡ *Our silenc'd.*

Behold rebellious virtue quite o'erthrown,
Behold our fame, our wealth, our lives, your own.
To such the plunder of a land is giv'n,
When publick crimes inflame the wrath of heaven:
[u]But what, my friend, what hope remains for me,
Who start at theft, and blush at perjury?
Who scarce forbear, though Britain's court he sing,
To pluck a titled poet's borrow'd wing;
A statesman's logick unconvinc'd can hear,
And dare to slumber o'er the *Gazetteer;
Despise a fool in half his pension dress'd,
And strive, in vain, to laugh at Clodio's jest†.
[v]Others, with softer smiles, and subtler art,
Can sap the principles, or taint the heart;
With more address a lover's note convey,
Or bribe a virgin's innocence away.
Well may they rise, while I, whose rustick tongue
Ne'er knew to puzzle right, or varnish wrong,
Spurn'd as a beggar, dreaded as a spy,
Live unregarded, unlamented die.
[w]For what but social guilt the friend endears?
Who shares Orgilio's crimes, his fortune shares.

[u] Quid Romæ faciam? Mentiri nescio: librum,
Si malus est, nequeo laudare et poscere:——

[v] ——Ferre ad nuptam, quæ mittit adulter,
Quæ mandat, norunt alii; me nemo ministro
Fur erit, atque ideo nulli comes exeo,—

[w] Quis nunc diligitur, nisi conscius?————
Carus erit Verri, qui Verrem tempore, quo vult,
Accusare potest.————

* The paper which, at that time, contained apologies for the court.

† *H——y's* jest.

[x] But thou, should tempting villany present
All Marlb'rough hoarded, or all Villiers spent,
Turn from the glitt'ring bribe thy scornful eye,
Nor sell for gold, what gold could never buy,
The peaceful slumber, self-approving day,
Unsullied fame, and conscience ever gay.

[y] The cheated nation's happy fav'rites, see!
Mark whom the great caress, who frown on me!
London! the needy villain's gen'ral home,
The common sewer of Paris and of Rome;
With eager thirst, by folly or by fate,
Sucks in the dregs of each corrupted state.
Forgive my transports, on a theme like this,
[z] I cannot bear a French metropolis.

[a] Illustrious Edward! from the realms of day,
The land of heroes and of saints survey;
Nor hope the British lineaments to trace,
The rustick grandeur, or the surly grace;
But, lost in thoughtless ease and empty show,
Behold the warrior dwindled to a beau;
Sense, freedom, piety, refin'd away,
Of France the mimick, and of Spain the prey.

All that at home no more can beg or steal,
Or like a gibbet better than a wheel;

[x] ———————Tanti tibi non sit opaci
Omnis arena Tagi, quodque in mare volvitur aurum,
Ut somno careas————

[y] Quæ nunc divitibus gens acceptissima nostris
Et quos præcipue fugiam, properabo fateri.

[z] ——Non possum ferre, Quirites,
Græcam urbem:————

[a] Rusticus ille tuus sumit trechedipna, Quirine,
Et ceromatico fert niceteria collo.

Hiss'd from the stage, or hooted from the court,
Their air, their dress, their politicks import;
[b]Obsequious, artful, voluble and gay,
On Britain's fond credulity they prey.
No gainful trade their industry can 'scape,
[c]They sing, they dance, clean shoes, or cure a clap:
All sciences a fasting, Monsieur knows,
And, bid him go to hell, to hell he goes.
[d]Ah! what avails it, that, from slav'ry far,
I drew the breath of life in English air;
Was early taught a Briton's right to prize,
And lisp the tale of Henry's victories;
If the gull'd conqueror receives the chain,
And flattery prevails, when arms are vain?*
[e]Studious to please, and ready to submit,
The supple Gaul was born a parasite:
Still to his int'rest true, where'er he goes,
Wit, brav'ry, worth, his lavish tongue bestows;
In ev'ry face a thousand graces shine,
From ev'ry tongue flows harmony divine.
[f]These arts in vain our rugged natives try,

[b] Ingenium velox, audacia perdita, sermo
Promptus———

[c] Augur, schœnobates, medicus, magus: omnia novit.
Græculus esuriens in cœlum, jusseris, ibit.

[d] Usque adeo nihil est, quod nostra infantia cœlum
Hausit Aventinum?———

[e] Quid? quod adulandi gens prudentissima laudat
Sermonem indocti, faciem deformis amici?

[f] Hæc eadem licet et nobis laudare: sed illis
Creditur.———

* And what their armies lost, their cringes gain.

Strain out, with fault'ring diffidence, a lie,
And get a kick* for awkward flattery.
  Besides, with justice, this discerning age
Admires their wondrous talents for the stage:
  [g] Well may they venture on the mimick's art,
Who play'd from morn to night a borrow'd part;
Practis'd their master's notions to embrace,
Repeat his maxims, and reflect his face;
With ev'ry wild absurdity comply,
And view each object with another's eye;
To shake with laughter, ere the jest they hear,
To pour at will the counterfeited tear;
And, as their patron hints the cold or heat,
To shake in dog-days, in December sweat.
  [h] How, when competitors, like these, contend,
Can surly virtue hope to fix a friend?
Slaves that with serious impudence beguile,
And lie without a blush, without a smile;
Exalt each trifle, ev'ry vice adore,
Your taste in snuff, your judgment in a whore:
Can Balbo's eloquence applaud, and swear,
He gropes his breeches with a monarch's air.
  For arts, like these, preferr'd, admir'd, caress'd,
They first invade your table, then your breast;

[g] Natio comœda est. Rides? majore cachinno
Concutitur, &c.

[h] Non sumus ergo pares: melior, qui semper et omni
Nocte dieque potest alienum sumere vultum,
A facie jactare manus, laudare paratus,
Si bene ructavit, si rectum minxit amicus.———

* And *gain* a kick.

[i] Explore your secrets with insidious art,
Watch the weak hour, and ransack all the heart;
Then soon your ill-placed confidence repay,
Commence your lords, and govern or betray.
[j] By numbers here from shame or censure free,
All crimes are safe, but hated poverty.
This, only this, the rigid law pursues,
This, only this, provokes the snarling muse.
The sober trader at a tatter'd cloak
Wakes from his dream, and labours for a joke;
With brisker air the silken courtiers gaze,
And turn the varied taunt a thousand ways.
[k] Of all the griefs, that harass the distress'd,
Sure the most bitter is a scornful jest;
Fate never wounds more deep the gen'rous heart,
Than when a blockhead's insult points the dart.
[l] Has heaven reserv'd, in pity to the poor,
No pathless waste, or undiscover'd shore?
No secret island in the boundless main?
No peaceful desert, yet unclaim'd by Spain*?
Quick let us rise, the happy seats explore,
And bear oppression's insolence no more.
This mournful truth is ev'ry where confess'd,

[i] Scire volunt secreta domus atque inde timeri.

[j] ———Materiam præbet causasque jocorum
Omnibus hic idem, si fœda et scissa lacerna, &c.

[k] Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se,
Quam quod ridiculos homines facit.——

[l] ———Agmine facto,
Debuerant olim tenues migrasse Quirites.

* The Spaniards at this time were said to make claim to some of our American provinces.

[m] SLOW RISES WORTH, BY POVERTY DEPRESS'D:
But here more slow, where all are slaves to gold,
Where looks are merchandise, and smiles are sold;
Where won by bribes, by flatteries implor'd,
The groom retails the favours of his lord.
But hark! th' affrighted crowd's tumultuous cries
Roll through the streets, and thunder to the skies:
Rais'd from some pleasing dream of wealth and pow'r,
Some pompous palace, or some blissful bow'r,
Aghast you start, and scarce, with aching sight,
Sustain th' approaching fire's tremendous light;
Swift from pursuing horrours take your way,
And leave your little ALL to flames a prey;
[n] Then through the world a wretched vagrant roam;
For where can starving merit find a home?
In vain your mournful narrative disclose,
While all neglect, and most insult your woes.
[o] Should heav'n's just bolts Orgilio's wealth confound,
*And spread his flaming palace on the ground,

[m] Haud facile emergunt, quorum virtutibus obstat
Res angusta domi; sed Romæ durior illis
Conatus:————
————Omnia Romæ
Cum pretio.————
Cogimur, et cultis augere peculia servis.

[n] ——Ultimus autem
Ærumnæ cumulus, quod nudum et frustra rogantem
Nemo cibo, nemo hospitio tectoque juvabit.

[o] Si magna Asturii cecidit domus, horrida mater:
Pullati proceres,——

* This was by Hitch, a bookseller, justly observed to be no picture of modern manners, though it might be true at Rome. MS. note in Dr. Johnson's hand-writing.

Swift o'er the land the dismal rumour flies,
And publick mournings pacify the skies;
The laureate tribe in venal verse relate,
How virtue wars with persecuting fate;
[p] With well-feign'd gratitude the pension'd band
Refund the plunder of the beggar'd land.
See! while he builds, the gaudy vassals come,
And crowd with sudden wealth the rising dome;
The price of boroughs and of souls restore;
And raise his treasures higher than before.
Now bless'd with all the baubles of the great,
The polish'd marble and the shining plate,
[q] Orgilio sees the golden pile aspire,
And hopes from angry heav'n another fire.
[r] Could'st thou resign the park and play, content,
For the fair banks of Severn or of Trent;
There might'st thou find some elegant retreat,
Some hireling senator's deserted seat;
And stretch thy prospects o'er the smiling land,
For less than rent the dungeons of the Strand;
There prune thy walks, support thy drooping flowers,
Direct thy rivulets, and twine thy bowers;
*And, while thy grounds a cheap repast afford,

[p] —— Jam accurrit, qui marmora donet,
Conferat impensas: hic &c.

[q] Hic modium argenti. Meliora, ac plura reponit
Persicus orborum lautissimus——

[r] Si potes avelli Circensibus, optima Soræ,
Aut Fabrateriæ domus, aut Frusinone paratur,
Quanti nunc tenebras unum conducis in annum.
Hortulus hic ——
Vive bidentis amans et culti villicus horti;
Unde epulum possis centum dare Pythagoreis.

* And, while thy *beds*.

Despise the dainties of a venal lord:
There ev'ry bush with nature's musick rings;
There ev'ry breeze bears health upon its wings;
On all thy hours security shall smile,
And bless thine evening walk and morning toil.
[s] Prepare for death, if here at night you roam,
And sign your will, before you sup from home.
[t] Some fiery fop, with new commission vain,
Who sleeps on brambles, till he kills his man;
Some frolick drunkard, reeling from a feast,
Provokes a broil, and stabs you for a jest.
[u] Yet e'en these heroes, mischievously gay,
Lords of the street, and terrours of the way;
Flush'd, as they are, with folly, youth, and wine;
Their prudent insults to the poor confine;
Afar they mark the flambeau's bright approach,
And shun the shining train, and golden coach.
[v] In vain, these dangers past, your doors you close,
And hope the balmy blessings of repose;
Cruel with guilt, and daring with despair,
The midnight murd'rer bursts the faithless bar;

[s] ——Possis ignavis haberi
Et subiti casus improvidus, ad cœnam si
Intestatus eas.——

[t] Ebrius, ac petulans, qui nullum forte cecidit,
Dat pœnas noctem patitur lugentis amicum
Pelidæ.————

[u] ——Sed, quamvis improbus annis,
Atque mero fervens, cavet hunc, quem coccina læna
Vitari jubet, et comitum longissimus ordo,
Multum præterea flammarum, atque ænea lampas.

[v] Nec tamen hoc tantum metuas: nam qui spoliet te,
Non deerit, clausis domnibus, &c.

Invades the sacred hour of silent rest,
*And leaves, unseen, a dagger in your breast.
[w] Scarce can our fields, such crowds at Tyburn die,
With hemp the gallows and the fleet supply.
Propose your schemes, ye senatorian band,
Whose ways and means† support the sinking land:
Lest ropes be wanting in the tempting spring,
To rig another convoy for the king‡.
[x] A single gaol, in Alfred's golden reign,
Could half the nation's criminals contain;
Fair justice, then, without constraint ador'd,
Held high the steady scale, but sheath'd the sword§;
No spies were paid, no special juries known,
Blest age! but ah! how diff'rent from our own!
[y] Much could I add,—but see the boat at hand,
The tide, retiring, calls me from the land:
[z] Farewell!—When youth, and health, and fortune spent,

[w] Maximus in vinclis ferri modus, ut timeas, ne
Vomer deficiat, ne marræ et sarcula desint.

[x] Felices proavorum atavos, felicia dicas
Sæcula, quæ quondam sub regibus atque tribunis
Viderunt uno contentam carcere Romam.

[y] His alias poteram, et plures subnectere causas:
Sed jumenta vocant———

[z] ——Ergo vale nostri memor et, quoties te
Roma tuo refici properantem reddet Aquino,
Me quoque ad Helvinam Cererem vestramque Dianam
Convelle a Cumis. Satirarum ego, ni pudet illas,
Adjutor gelidos veniam caligatus in agros.

* And *plants* unseen.

† A cant term in the house of commons for methods of raising money.

‡ The nation was discontented at the visits made by the king to Hanover.

§ *Sustain'd* the *balance*, but *resign'd* the sword.

Thou fly'st for refuge to the wilds of Kent;
And, tir'd, like me, with follies and with crimes,
In angry numbers warn'st succeeding times;
Then shall thy friend, nor thou refuse his aid,
Still foe to vice, forsake his Cambrian shade;
In virtue's cause, once more, exert his rage,
Thy satire point, and animate thy page.

THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES

IN IMITATION OF THE TENTH SATIRE OF JUVENAL

Let [a]observation, with extensive view,
Survey mankind, from China to Peru;
Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,
And watch the busy scenes of crowded life;
Then say, how hope and fear, desire and hate
O'erspread with snares the clouded maze of fate;
Where wav'ring man, betray'd by vent'rous pride
To tread the dreary paths, without a guide,
As treach'rous phantoms in the mist delude,
Shuns fancied ills, or chases airy good;
How rarely reason guides the stubborn choice,
Rules the bold hand, or prompts the suppliant voice;
How nations sink, by darling schemes oppress'd,
When vengeance listens to the fool's request.
Fate wings with ev'ry wish th' afflictive dart,
Each gift of nature, and each grace of art;
With fatal heat impetuous courage glows,
With fatal sweetness elocution flows,

[a] Ver. 1—11.

Impeachment stops the speaker's pow'rful breath,
And restless fire precipitates on death.
[b]But, scarce observ'd, the knowing and the bold
Fall in the gen'ral massacre of gold;
Wide wasting pest! that rages unconfin'd,
And crowds with crimes the records of mankind;
For gold his sword the hireling ruffian draws,
For gold the hireling judge distorts the laws;
Wealth heap'd on wealth, nor truth nor safety buys,
The dangers gather as the treasures rise.
Let hist'ry tell where rival kings command,
And dubious title shakes the madded land,
When statutes glean the refuse of the sword,
How much more safe the vassal than the lord;
Low sculks the hind beneath the rage of power,
And leaves the wealthy traitor in the Tower[c],
Untouch'd his cottage, and his slumbers sound,
Though confiscation's vultures hover round[d].
The needy traveller, serene and gay,
Walks the wild heath, and sings his toil away.
Does envy seize thee? crush th' upbraiding joy;
Increase his riches, and his peace destroy;
[e]Now fears, in dire vicissitude, invade,
The rustling brake alarms, and quiv'ring shade;
Nor light nor darkness bring his pain relief,
One shows the plunder, and one hides the thief.
[f]Yet still one gen'ral cry[g] the skies assails,

[b] Ver. 12—22.

[c] In the first edition, "the *bonny* traitor!" an evident allusion to the Scotch lords who suffered for the rebellion in 1745.

[d] Clang around. [e] *New* fears. [f] Ver. 23—37.

[g] Yet still *the* gen'ral cry.

And gain and grandeur load the tainted gales:
Few know the toiling statesman's fear or care,
Th' insidious rival, and the gaping heir.
[h]Once more, Democritus, arise on earth,
With cheerful wisdom and instructive mirth,
See motley life in modern trappings dress'd,
And feed with varied fools th' eternal jest:
Thou, who could'st laugh where want enchain'd caprice,
Toil crush'd conceit, and man was of a piece;
Where wealth, unlov'd, without a mourner died;
And scarce a sycophant was fed by pride;
Where ne'er was known the form of mock debate,
Or seen a new-made mayor's unwieldy state;
Where change of fav'rites made no change of laws,
And senates heard, before they judg'd a cause;
How would'st thou shake at Britain's modish tribe,
Dart the quick taunt, and edge the piercing gibe?
Attentive truth and nature to descry,
And pierce each scene with philosophick eye;
To thee were solemn toys, or empty show,
The robes of pleasure, and the veils of woe:
All aid the farce, and all thy mirth maintain,
Whose joys are causeless, or whose griefs are vain.
Such was the scorn that fill'd the sage's mind,
Renew'd at ev'ry glance on human kind;
How just that scorn, ere yet thy voice declare,
Search ev'ry state, and canvass ev'ry pray'r.
[i]Unnumber'd suppliants crowd preferment's gate,
Athirst for wealth, and burning to be great;

[h] Ver. 28—55. [i] Ver. 56—107.

Delusive fortune hears th' incessant call,
They mount, they shine, evaporate, and fall.
On ev'ry stage the foes of peace attend,
Hate dogs their flight, and insult mocks their end.
Love ends with hope, the sinking statesman's door
Pours in the morning worshipper no more;
For growing names the weekly scribbler lies,
To growing wealth the dedicator flies;
From ev'ry room descends the painted face,
That hung the bright palladium of the place;
And, smok'd in kitchens, or in auctions sold,
To better features yields the frame of gold;
For now no more we trace in ev'ry line
Heroick worth, benevolence divine:
The form, distorted, justifies the fall,
And detestation rids th' indignant wall.

But will not Britain hear the last appeal,
Sign her foes' doom, or guard her fav'rites' zeal?
Through freedom's sons no more remonstrance rings,
Degrading nobles and controling kings;
Our supple tribes repress their patriot throats,
And ask no questions but the price of votes;
With weekly libels and septennial ale,
Their wish is full to riot and to rail.

In full-blown dignity, see Wolsey stand,
Law in his voice, and fortune in his hand;
To him the church, the realm their pow'rs consign,
Through him the rays of regal bounty shine;
Turn'd by his nod the stream of honour flows,
His smile alone security bestows.

Still to new heights his restless wishes tow'r,
Claim leads to claim, and pow'r advances pow'r;
Till conquest, unresisted, ceas'd to please,
And rights, submitted, left him none to seize.
At length his sov'reign frowns—the train of state
Mark the keen glance, and watch the sign to hate.
Where'er he turns, he meets a stranger's eye,
His suppliants scorn him, and his followers fly;
Now drops, at once. the pride of awful state,
The golden canopy, the glitt'ring plate,
The regal palace, the luxurious board,
The liv'ried army, and the menial lord.
With age, with cares, with maladies oppress'd,
He seeks the refuge of monastick rest:
Grief aids disease, remember'd folly stings,
And his last sighs reproach the faith of kings.
Speak thou, whose thoughts at humble peace repine,
Shall Wolsey's wealth, with Wolsey's end, be thine?
Or liv'st thou now, with safer pride content,
[j] The wisest justice on the banks of Trent?
For, why did Wolsey, near the steeps of fate,
On weak foundations raise th' enormous weight?
Why but to sink beneath misfortune's blow,
With louder ruin to the gulfs below?
[k] What gave great Villiers to th' assassin's knife,
And fix'd disease on Harley's closing life?
What murder'd Wentworth, and what exil'd Hyde,
By kings protected, and to kings allied?

[j] The *richest landlord.* [k] Ver. 108—113.

What but their wish indulg'd in courts to shine,
And pow'r too great to keep, or to resign?
[l]When first the college rolls receive his name,
The young enthusiast quits his ease for fame;
[m]Through all his veins the fever of renown
Spreads from the strong contagion of the gown;
O'er Bodley's dome his future labours spread,
And [n]Bacon's mansion trembles o'er his head.
Are these thy views? Proceed, illustrious youth,
And virtue guard thee to the throne of truth!
Yet, should thy soul indulge the gen'rous heat
Till captive science yields her last retreat;
Should reason guide thee with her brightest ray,
And pour on misty doubt resistless day;
Should no false kindness lure to loose delight,
Nor praise relax, nor difficulty fright;
Should tempting novelty thy cell refrain,
[o]And sloth effuse her opiate fumes in vain;
Should beauty blunt on fops her fatal dart,
Nor claim the triumph of a letter'd heart;
Should no disease thy torpid veins invade,
Nor melancholy's phantoms haunt thy shade;

[l] Ver. 114—132.

[m] *Resistless burns* the fever of renown,
Caught from the strong contagion of the gown.

Mr. Boswell tells us, that when he remarked to Dr. Johnson, that there was an awkward repetition of the word *spreads* in this passage, he altered it to "Burns from the strong contagion of the gown;" but this expression, it appears, was only resumed from the reading in the first edition.

[n] There is a tradition, that the study of friar Bacon, built on an arch over the bridge, will fall, when a man greater than Bacon shall pass under it. To prevent so shocking an accident, it was pulled down many years since.

[o] And sloth's *bland* opiates *shed* their fumes in vain.

Yet hope not life, from grief or danger free,
Nor think the doom of man revers'd for thee:
Deign on the passing world to turn thine eyes,
And pause awhile from letters, to be wise;
There mark what ills the scholar's life assail,
Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the gaol[p].
See nations, slowly wise and meanly just,
To buried merit raise the tardy bust.
If dreams yet flatter, once again attend,
Hear Lydiat's life, and Galileo's end[q].

Nor deem, when learning her last prize bestows,
The glitt'ring eminence exempt from woes;
See, when the vulgar scape[r], despis'd or aw'd,
Rebellion's vengeful talons seize on Laud.
From meaner minds though smaller fines content,
The plunder'd palace, or sequester'd rent;
Mark'd out by dang'rous parts, he meets the shock,
And fatal learning leads him to the block:
Around his tomb let art and genius weep,
But hear his death, ye blockheads, hear and sleep.

[s] The festal blazes, the triumphal show,
The ravish'd standard, and the captive foe,
The senate's thanks, the gazette's pompous tale,
With force resistless o'er the brave prevail.
Such bribes the rapid Greek o'er Asia whirl'd;

[p] The *garret* and the gaol.

[q] See Gent. Mag. vol. lxviii. p. 951, 1027.

[r] This was first written, "See, when the vulgar scap*ed*;" but, as the rest of the paragraph was in the present tense, he altered it to scape*s*; but again recollecting that the word *vulgar* is never used as a singular substantive, he adopted the reading of the text.

[s] Ver. 133—146.

For such the steady Romans shook the world;
For such, in distant lands, the Britons shine,
And stain with blood the Danube or the Rhine;
This pow'r has praise, that virtue scarce can warm,
Till fame supplies the universal charm.
Yet reason frowns on war's unequal game,
Where wasted nations raise a single name;
And mortgag'd states, their grandsires' wreaths regret,
From age to age in everlasting debt;
Wreaths which, at last, the dear-bought right convey
To rust on medals, or on stones decay.
[t] On what foundation stands the warriour's pride,
How just his hopes, let Swedish Charles decide;
A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him, and no labours tire;
[u] O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,
Unconquer'd lord of pleasure and of pain;
No joys to him pacifick sceptres yield,
War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field;
Behold surrounding kings their pow'rs combine,
And one capitulate, and one resign;
Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain;
"Think nothing gain'd," he cries, "till nought remain,
On Moscow's walls till Gothick standards fly,
And all be mine beneath the polar sky."
The march begins in military state,
And nations on his eye suspended wait;
Stern famine guards the solitary coast,

[t] Ver. 147—167.

[u] O'er love or *force*.

And winter barricades the realm of frost;
He comes, nor want nor cold his course delay;—
Hide, blushing glory, hide Pultowa's day:
The vanquish'd hero leaves his broken bands,
And shows his miseries in distant lands;
Condemn'd a needy supplicant to wait,
While ladies interpose, and slaves debate.
But did not chance, at length, her errour mend?
Did no subverted empire mark his end?
Did rival monarchs give the fatal wound?
Or hostile millions press him to the ground?
His fall was destin'd to a barren strand,
A petty fortress, and a dubious hand;
He left the name, at which the world grew pale,
To point a moral, or adorn a tale.

[v] All times their scenes of pompous woes afford,
From Persia's tyrant to Bavaria's lord.
In gay hostility and barb'rous pride,
With half mankind embattl'd at his side,
Great Xerxes comes to seize the certain prey,
And starves exhausted regions in his way;
Attendant flatt'ry counts his myriads o'er,
Till counted myriads sooth his pride no more;
Fresh praise is try'd till madness fires his mind,
The waves he lashes, and enchains the wind,
New pow'rs are claimed, new pow'rs are still be-
stow'd,
Till rude resistance lops the spreading god;
The daring Greeks deride the martial show,
And heap their valleys with the gaudy foe;

[v] Ver. 168—187.

Th' insulted sea, with humbler thoughts, he gains;
A single skiff to speed his flight remains;
Th' incumber'd oar scarce leaves the dreaded coast
Through purple billows and a floating host.
The bold Bavarian, in a luckless hour,
Tries the dread summits of Cæsarean pow'r,
With unexpected legions bursts away,
And sees defenceless realms receive his sway;—
Short sway! fair Austria spreads her mournful charms,
The queen, the beauty, sets the world in arms;
From hill to hill the beacon's rousing blaze
Spreads wide the hope of plunder and of praise;
The fierce Croatian, and the wild Hussar,
[w]With all the sons of ravage, crowd the war;
The baffled prince, in honour's flatt'ring bloom
Of hasty greatness, finds the fatal doom,
His foes' derision, and his subjects' blame,
And steals to death from anguish and from shame.
[x]Enlarge my life with multitude of days!
In health, in sickness, thus the suppliant prays;
Hides from himself his state, and shuns to know,
That life protracted is protracted woe.
Time hovers o'er, impatient to destroy,
And shuts up all the passages of joy;
In vain their gifts the bounteous seasons pour,
The fruit autumnal, and the vernal flow'r;
With listless eyes the dotard views the store,
He views, and wonders that they please no more;

[w] *And* all the sons. [x] Ver. 188—288.

Now pall the tasteless meats, and joyless wines,
And luxury with sighs her slave resigns.
Approach, ye minstrels, try the soothing strain,
[y]Diffuse the tuneful lenitives of pain:
No sounds, alas ! would touch th' impervious ear,
Though dancing mountains witness'd Orpheus near;
Nor lute nor lyre his feeble pow'rs attend,
Nor sweeter musick of a virtuous friend;
But everlasting dictates crowd his tongue,
Perversely grave, or positively wrong.
The still returning tale, and ling'ring jest,
Perplex the fawning niece and pamper'd guest,
While growing hopes scarce awe the gath'ring sneer,
And scarce a legacy can bribe to hear;
The watchful guests still hint the last offence;
The daughter's petulance, the son's expense,
Improve his heady rage with treach'rous skill,
And mould his passions till they make his will.

Unnumber'd maladies his joints invade,
Lay siege to life, and press the dire blockade;
But unextinguish'd av'rice still remains,
And dreaded losses aggravate his pains;
He turns, with anxious heart and crippled hands,
His bonds of debt, and mortgages of lands;
Or views his coffers with suspicious eyes,
Unlocks his gold, and counts it till he dies.

But grant, the virtues of a temp'rate prime
Bless with an age exempt from scorn or crime;
[z]An age that melts with unperceiv'd decay,
And glides in modest innocence away;

[y] And *yield*.

[z] An age that melts *in*.

Whose peaceful day benevolence endears,
Whose night congratulating conscience cheers;
The gen'ral fav'rite as the gen'ral friend;
Such age there is, and who shall wish its end[a]?
Yet e'en on this her load misfortune flings,
To press the weary minutes' flagging wings;
New sorrow rises as the day returns,
A sister sickens, or a daughter mourns.
Now kindred merit fills the sable bier,
Now lacerated friendship claims a tear;
Year chases year, decay pursues decay,
Still drops some joy from with'ring life away;
New forms arise, and diff'rent views engage,
Superfluous lags the vet'ran on the stage,
Till pitying nature signs the last release,
And bids afflicted worth retire to peace.
But few there are whom hours like these await,
Who set unclouded in the gulfs of fate.
From Lydia's monarch should the search descend,
By Solon caution'd to regard his end,
In life's last scene what prodigies surprise,
Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise!
From Marlb'rough's eyes the streams of dotage flow,
And Swift expires a driv'ller and a show.
[b]The teeming mother, anxious for her race,
Begs for each birth the fortune of a face;
Yet Vane could tell what ills from beauty spring;
And Sedley curs'd the form that pleas'd a king.
Ye nymphs of rosy lips and radiant eyes,

[a] *Could* wish its end. [b] Ver. 289—345.

Whom pleasure keeps too busy to be wise;
Whom joys with soft varieties invite,
By day the frolick, and the dance by night;
Who frown with vanity, who smile with art,
And ask the latest fashion of the heart;
What care, what rules, your heedless charms shall save,
Each nymph your rival, and each youth your slave?
Against your fame with fondness hate combines,
The rival batters, and the lover mines.
With distant voice neglected virtue calls,
Less heard and less, the faint remonstrance falls;
Tir'd with contempt, she quits the slipp'ry reign,
And pride and prudence take her seat in vain.
In crowd at once, where none the pass defend,
The harmless freedom, and the private friend.
The guardians yield, by force superiour ply'd:
To int'rest, prudence; and to flatt'ry, pride.
Here beauty falls, betray'd, despis'd, distress'd,
And hissing infamy proclaims the rest.
[c]Where then shall hope and fear their objects find?
Must dull suspense corrupt the stagnant mind?
Must helpless man, in ignorance sedate,
Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate?
Must no dislike alarm, no wishes rise,
No cries invoke the mercies of the skies?
Inquirer, cease; petitions yet remain
Which heav'n may hear; nor deem religion vain.
Still raise for good the supplicating voice,
But leave to heav'n the measure and the choice.

[c] Ver. 346—366

Safe in his pow'r, whose eyes discern afar
The secret ambush of a specious pray'r;
Implore his aid, in his decisions rest,
Secure, whate'er he gives, he gives the best.
Yet, when the sense of sacred presence fires,
And strong devotion to the skies aspires[d],
Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,
Obedient passions, and a will resign'd;
For love, which scarce collective man can fill;
For patience, sov'reign o'er transmuted ill;
For faith, that, panting for a happier seat,
[e]Counts death kind nature's signal of retreat:
These goods for man the laws of heav'n ordain;
These goods he grants, who grants the pow'r to gain;
With these celestial wisdom calms the mind,
And makes the happiness she does not find.

[d] Yet, *with* the sense of sacred presence *press'd*,
When strong devotion *fills thy glowing breast.*

[e] *Thinks* death.

PROLOGUE

SPOKEN BY MR. GARRICK, AT THE OPENING OF THE THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY LANE, 1747

When learning's triumph o'er her barb'rous foes
First rear'd the stage, immortal Shakespeare rose;
Each change of many-colour'd life he drew,
Exhausted worlds, and then imagin'd new:
Existence saw him spurn her bounded reign,
And panting time toil'd after him in vain:
His pow'rful strokes presiding truth impress'd,
And unresisted passion storm'd the breast.
Then Jonson came, instructed from the school
To please in method, and invent by rule;
His studious patience and laborious art,
By regular approach, assail'd the heart:
Cold approbation gave the ling'ring bays;
For those, who durst not censure, scarce could praise:
A mortal born, he met the gen'ral doom,
But left, like Egypt's kings, a lasting tomb.
The wits of Charles found easier ways to fame,
Nor wish'd for Jonson's art, or Shakespeare's flame:
Themselves they studied, as they felt, they writ;
Intrigue was plot, obscenity was wit;
Vice always found a sympathetick friend;
They pleas'd their age, and did not aim to mend.
Yet bards, like these, aspir'd to lasting praise,
And proudly hop'd to pimp in future days.

Their cause was gen'ral, their supports were strong;
Their slaves were willing, and their reign was long:
Till shame regain'd the post that sense betray'd,
And virtue call'd oblivion to her aid.
Then, crush'd by rules, and weaken'd, as refin'd,
For years the pow'r of tragedy declin'd;
From bard to bard the frigid caution crept,
Till declamation roar'd, while passion slept;
Yet still did virtue deign the stage to tread,
Philosophy remain'd, though nature fled.
But forced, at length, her ancient reign to quit,
She saw great Faustus lay the ghost of wit;
Exulting folly hail'd the joyful day,
And pantomime and song confirm'd her sway.
But who the coming changes can presage,
And mark the future periods of the stage?
Perhaps, if skill could distant times explore,
New Behms, new Durfeys, yet remain in store;
Perhaps, where Lear has rav'd, and Hamlet dy'd,
On flying cars new sorcerers may ride:
Perhaps, (for who can guess th' effects of chance?)
Here Hunt[f] may box, or Mahomet may dance.
Hard is his lot that, here by fortune plac'd,
Must watch the wild vicissitudes of taste;
With ev'ry meteor of caprice must play,
And chase the new-blown bubbles of the day.
Ah! let not censure term our fate our choice,
The stage but echoes back the publick voice;

[f] Hunt, a famous boxer on the stage; Mahomet, a ropedancer, who had exhibited at Covent garden theatre the winter before, said to be a Turk.

PROLOGUE

The drama's laws the drama's patrons give,
For we that live to please, must please to live.
  Then prompt no more the follies you decry,
As tyrants doom their tools of guilt to die;
'Tis yours, this night, to bid the reign commence
Of rescued nature and reviving sense;
To chase the charms of sound, the pomp of show,
For useful mirth and salutary woe;
Bid scenick virtue form the rising age,
And truth diffuse her radiance from the stage.

PREFATORY NOTICE TO THE TRAGEDY OF IRENE

THE history of this tragedy's composition is interesting, as affording dates to distinguish Johnson's literary progress. It was begun, and considerably advanced, while he kept a school at Edial, near Lichfield, in 1736. In the following year, when he relinquished the task of a schoolmaster, so little congenial with his mind and disposition, and resolved to seek his fortunes in the metropolis, Irene was carried along with him as a foundation for his success. Mr. Walmsley, one of his early friends, recommended him, and his fellow-adventurer, Garrick, to the notice and protection of Colson, the mathematician. Unless Mrs. Piozzi is correct, in rescuing the character of Colson from any identity with that of Gelidus, in the Rambler[g], Johnson entertained no lively recollection of his first patron's kindness. He was ever warm in expressions of gratitude for favours, conferred on him in his season of want and obscurity; and from his deep silence here, we may conclude, that the recluse mathematician did not evince much sympathy with the distresses of the young candidate for dramatic fame. Be this, however, as it may, Johnson, shortly after this introduction, took lodgings at Greenwich, to proceed with his Irene in quiet and retirement, but soon returned to Lichfield, to complete it. The same year that saw

[g] Rambler, No. 24, and note.

these successive disappointments, witnessed also Johnson's return to London, with his tragedy completed, and its rejection by Fleetwood, the patentee, at that time, of Drury lane theatre. Twelve years elapsed, before it was acted, and, after many alterations by his pupil and companion, Garrick, who was then manager of the theatre, it was, by his zeal, and the support of the most eminent performers of the day, carried through a representation of nine nights. Johnson's profits, after the deduction of expenses, and together with the hundred pounds, which he received from Robert Dodsley, for the copy, were nearly three hundred pounds. So fallacious were the hopes cherished by Walmsley, that Johnson would "turn out a fine tragedy writer[h]."

"The tragedy of Irene," says Mr. Murphy, "is founded on a passage in Knolles's History of the Turks;" an author highly commended in the Rambler, No. 122. An incident in the life of Mahomet the great, first emperor of the Turks, is the hinge, on which the fable is made to move. The substance of the story is shortly this:—In 1453, Mahomet laid siege to Constantinople, and, having reduced the place, became enamoured of a fair Greek, whose name was Irene. The sultan invited her to embrace the law of the prophet, and to grace his throne. Enraged at this intended marriage, the janizaries formed a conspiracy to dethrone the emperor. To avert the impending danger, Mahomet, in a full assembly of

[h] Boswell's Life, i.

the grandees, "catching, with one hand," as Knolles relates it, "the fair Greek by the hair of her head, and drawing his falchion with the other, he, at one blow, struck off her head, to the great terror of them all; and, having so done, said unto them, 'Now, by this, judge whether your emperor is able to bridle his affections or not[i].'" We are not unjust, we conceive, in affirming, that there is an interest kept alive in the plain and simple narrative of the old historian, which is lost in the declamatory tragedy of Johnson.

It is sufficient, for our present purpose, to confess that he *has* failed in this his only dramatic attempt; we shall endeavour, more fully, to show *how* he has failed, in our discussion of his powers as a critic. That they were not blinded to the defects of others, by his own inefficiency in dramatic composition, is fully proved by his judicious remarks on Cato, which was constructed on a plan similar to Irene: and the strongest censure, ever passed on this tragedy, was conveyed in Garrick's application of Johnson's own severe, but correct critique, on the wits of Charles, in whose works

"Declamation roar'd, while passion slept[j]."

"Addison speaks the language of poets," says Johnson, in his preface to Shakespeare, "and Shakespeare of men. We find in Cato innumerable beauties, which enamour us of its author, but we see

[i] Murphy's Essay on the Life and Genius of Dr. Johnson.
[j] Prologue at the opening of Drury lane theatre, 1747.

nothing that acquaints us with human sentiments, or human actions; we place it with the fairest and the noblest progeny which judgment propagates by conjunction with learning; but Othello is the vigorous and vivacious offspring of observation, impregnated by genius. Cato affords a splendid exhibition of artificial and fictitious manners, and delivers just and noble sentiments, in diction easy, elevated and harmonious; but its hopes and fears communicate no vibration to the heart: the composition refers us only to the writer; we pronounce the name of Cato, but we think on Addison.'' The critic's remarks on the same tragedy, in his Life of Addison, are as applicable as the above to his own production. ''Cato is rather a poem in dialogue than a drama; rather a succession of just sentiments in elegant language, than a representation of natural affections, or of any state probable or possible in human life. Nothing here 'excites or assuages emotion:' here is no 'magical power of raising phantastick terrour or wild anxiety.' The events are expected without solicitude, and are remembered without joy or sorrow. Of the agents we have no care; we consider not what they are doing, or what they are suffering; we wish only to know what they have to say.''

But, while we thus pronounce Johnson's failure in the production of dramatic effect, we will not withhold our tribute of admiration from Irene, as a moral piece. For, although a remark of Fox's on an unpublished tragedy of Burke's, that it was rather rhetorical than poetical, may be applied to the work

under consideration; still it abounds, throughout, with the most elevated and dignified lessons of morality and virtue. The address of Demetrius to the aged Cali, on the dangers of procrastination[k]; Aspasia's reprobation of Irene's meditated apostasy[l]; and the allusive panegyric on the British constitution[m], may be enumerated, as examples of its excellence in sentiment and diction.

Lastly, we may consider Irene, as one other illustrious proof, that the most strict adherence to the far-famed unities, the most harmonious versification, and the most correct philosophy, will not vie with a single and simple touch of nature, expressed in simple and artless language. "But how rich in reputation must that author be, who can spare *an Irene*, and not feel the loss[n]."

[k] Act iii. scene ii. "To-morrow's action!" &c.

[l] Act iii. scene viii. "Reflect, that life and death," &c.

[m] Act i. scene ii. "If there be any land, as fame reports," &c.

[n] Dr. Young's remark on Addison's Cato. See his Conjectures on Original Composition. Works, vol. v.

PROLOGUE

Ye glitt'ring train, whom lace and velvet bless,
Suspend the soft solicitudes of dress!
From grov'ling bus'ness and superfluous care,
Ye sons of avarice, a moment spare!
Vot'ries of fame, and worshippers of power,
Dismiss the pleasing phantoms for an hour!
Our daring bard, with spirit unconfin'd,
Spreads wide the mighty moral for mankind.
Learn here, how heaven supports the virtuous mind,
Daring, though calm; and vig'rous, though resign'd;
Learn here, what anguish racks the guilty breast,
In pow'r dependant, in success depress'd.
Learn here, that peace from innocence must flow;
All else is empty sound, and idle show.
If truths, like these, with pleasing language join;
Ennobled, yet unchang'd, if nature shine;
If no wild draught depart from reason's rules;
Nor gods his heroes, nor his lovers fools;
Intriguing wits! his artless plot forgive;
And spare him, beauties! though his lovers live.
Be this, at least, his praise, be this his pride;
To force applause, no modern arts are try'd.
Should partial catcals all his hopes confound,
He bids no trumpet quell the fatal sound.
Should welcome sleep relieve the weary wit,
He rolls no thunders o'er the drowsy pit;
No snares, to captivate the judgment, spreads,

Nor bribes your eyes to prejudice your heads.
Unmov'd, though witlings sneer, and rivals rail,
Studious to please, yet not asham'd to fail,
He scorns the meek address, the suppliant strain,
With merit needless, and without it vain.
In reason, nature, truth, he dares to trust:
Ye fops, be silent: and, ye wits, be just!

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA

MEN

MAHOMET,	Emperour of the Turks,	Mr. Barry.
CALI BASSA,	First vizier,	Mr. Berry.
MUSTAPHA,	A Turkish aga,	Mr. Sowden.
ABDALLA,	An officer,	Mr. Havard.
HASAN,	Turkish captains,	Mr. Usher,
CARAZA,		Mr. Burton.
DEMETRIUS,	Greek noblemen,	Mr. Garrick,
LEONTIUS,		Mr. Blakes.
MURZA,	An eunuch,	Mr. King.

WOMEN

ASPASIA,	Greek ladies,	Mrs. Cibber,
IRENE,		Mrs. Pritchard.

Attendants on Irene

IRENE; A TRAGEDY

ACT I.—SCENE I

DEMETRIUS *and* LEONTIUS, *in Turkish habits*

LEONTIUS

AND, is it thus Demetrius meets his friend,
Hid in the mean disguise of Turkish robes,
With servile secrecy to lurk in shades,
And vent our suff'rings in clandestine groans?

DEMETRIUS

Till breathless fury rested from destruction,
These groans were fatal, these disguises vain:
But, now our Turkish conquerors have quench'd
Their rage, and pall'd their appetite of murder,
No more the glutted sabre thirsts for blood;
And weary cruelty remits her tortures.

LEONTIUS

Yet Greece enjoys no gleam of transient hope,
No soothing interval of peaceful sorrow:
The lust of gold succeeds the rage of conquest;—
The lust of gold, unfeeling and remorseless,
The last corruption of degen'rate man!
Urg'd by th' imperious soldiers' fierce command,
The groaning Greeks break up their golden caverns,
Pregnant with stores, that India's mines might envy,
Th' accumulated wealth of toiling ages.

DEMETRIUS

That wealth, too sacred for their country's use!
That wealth, too pleasing to be lost for freedom!
That wealth, which, granted to their weeping prince,
Had rang'd embattled nations at our gates!
But, thus reserv'd to lure the wolves of Turkey,
Adds shame to grief, and infamy to ruin.
Lamenting av'rice, now too late, discovers
Her own neglected in the publick safety.

LEONTIUS

Reproach not misery.— The sons of Greece,
Ill fated race! so oft besieg'd in vain,
With false security beheld invasion.
Why should they fear?— That pow'r that kindly spreads
The clouds, a signal of impending show'rs,
To warn the wand'ring linnet to the shade,
Beheld without concern expiring Greece;
And not one prodigy foretold our fate.

DEMETRIUS

A thousand horrid prodigies foretold it:
A feeble government, eluded laws,
A factious populace, luxurious nobles,
And all the maladies of sinking states.
When publick villany, too strong for justice,
Shows his bold front, the harbinger of ruin,
Can brave Leontius call for airy wonders,
Which cheats interpret, and which fools regard?

When some neglected fabrick nods beneath
The weight of years, and totters to the tempest,
Must heav'n despatch the messengers of light,
Or wake the dead, to warn us of its fall?

LEONTIUS

Well might the weakness of our empire sink
Before such foes of more than human force:
Some pow'r invisible, from heav'n or hell,
Conducts their armies, and asserts their cause.

DEMETRIUS

And yet, my friend, what miracles were wrought
Beyond the pow'r of constancy and courage?
Did unresisted lightning aid their cannon?
Did roaring whirlwinds sweep us from the ramparts?
'Twas vice that shook our nerves, 'twas vice, Leontius,
That froze our veins, and wither'd all our pow'rs.

LEONTIUS

Whate'er our crimes, our woes demand compassion.
Each night, protected by the friendly darkness,
Quitting my close retreat, I range the city,
And, weeping, kiss the venerable ruins;
With silent pangs, I view the tow'ring domes,
Sacred to pray'r; and wander through the streets,
Where commerce lavish'd unexhausted plenty,
And jollity maintain'd eternal revels—

DEMETRIUS

—How chang'd, alas!—Now ghastly desolation,
In triumph, sits upon our shatter'd spires;

Now superstition, ignorance, and errour,
Usurp our temples, and profane our altars.

LEONTIUS

From ev'ry palace bursts a mingled clamour,
The dreadful dissonance of barb'rous triumph,
Shrieks of affright, and wailings of distress.
Oft when the cries of violated beauty
Arose to heav'n, and pierc'd my bleeding breast,
I felt thy pains, and trembled for Aspasia.

DEMETRIUS

Aspasia!—spare that lov'd, that mournful name:
Dear, hapless maid—tempestuous grief o'erbears
My reasoning pow'rs—Dear, hapless, lost Aspasia!

LEONTIUS

Suspend the thought.

DEMETRIUS

All thought on her is madness;
Yet let me think—I see the helpless maid;
Behold the monsters gaze with savage rapture,
Behold how lust and rapine struggle round her!

LEONTIUS

Awake, Demetrius, from this dismal dream;
Sink not beneath imaginary sorrows;
Call to your aid your courage and your wisdom;
Think on the sudden change of human scenes;
Think on the various accidents of war;
Think on the mighty pow'r of awful virtue;
Think on that providence that guards the good.

DEMETRIUS

O providence! extend thy care to me;
For courage droops, unequal to the combat;
And weak philosophy denies her succours.
Sure, some kind sabre in the heat of battle,
Ere yet the foe found leisure to be cruel,
Dismiss'd her to the sky.

LEONTIUS

Some virgin martyr,
Perhaps, enamour'd of resembling virtue,
With gentle hand, restrain'd the streams of life,
And snatch'd her timely from her country's fate.

DEMETRIUS

From those bright regions of eternal day,
Where now thou shin'st among thy fellow-saints,
Array'd in purer light, look down on me:
In pleasing visions and assuasive dreams,
O! sooth my soul, and teach me how to lose thee.

LEONTIUS

Enough of unavailing tears, Demetrius:
I come obedient to thy friendly summons,
And hop'd to share thy counsels, not thy sorrows:
While thus we mourn the fortune of Aspasia,
To what are we reserv'd?

DEMETRIUS

To what I know not:
But hope, yet hope, to happiness and honour;
If happiness can be, without Aspasia.

LEONTIUS

But whence this new-sprung hope?

DEMETRIUS

From Cali bassa,
The chief, whose wisdom guides the Turkish counsels.
He, tir'd of slav'ry, though the highest slave,
Projects, at once, our freedom and his own;
And bids us, thus disguis'd, await him here.

LEONTIUS

Can he restore the state he could not save?
In vain, when Turkey's troops assail'd our walls,
His kind intelligence betray'd their measure;
Their arms prevail'd, though Cali was our friend.

DEMETRIUS

When the tenth sun had set upon our sorrows,
At midnight's private hour, a voice unknown
Sounds in my sleeping ear, 'Awake, Demetrius,
Awake, and follow me to better fortunes.'
Surpris'd I start, and bless the happy dream;
Then, rousing, know the fiery chief Abdalla,
Whose quick impatience seiz'd my doubtful hand,
And led me to the shore where Cali stood,
Pensive, and list'ning to the beating surge.
There, in soft hints, and in ambiguous phrase,
With all the diffidence of long experience,
That oft had practis'd fraud, and oft detected,
The vet'ran courtier half reveal'd his project.
By his command, equipp'd for speedy flight,

Deep in a winding creek a galley lies,
Mann'd with the bravest of our fellow-captives,
Selected by my care, a hardy band,
That long to hail thee chief.

LEONTIUS

But what avails
So small a force? or, why should Cali fly?
Or, how can Cali's flight restore our country?

DEMETRIUS

Reserve these questions for a safer hour;
Or hear himself, for see the bassa comes.

SCENE II

DEMETRIUS, LEONTIUS, CALI

CALI

Now summon all thy soul, illustrious christian!
Awake each faculty that sleeps within thee:
The courtier's policy, the sage's firmness,
The warriour's ardour, and the patriot's zeal.
If, chasing past events with vain pursuit,
Or wand'ring in the wilds of future being,
A single thought now rove, recall it home.—
But can thy friend sustain the glorious cause,
The cause of liberty, the cause of nations?

DEMETRIUS

Observe him closely, with a statesman's eye,
Thou, that hast long perus'd the draughts of nature,
And know'st the characters of vice and virtue,
Left by the hand of heav'n on human clay.

CALI

His mien is lofty, his demeanour great;
Nor sprightly folly wantons in his air;
Nor dull serenity becalms his eyes.
Such had I trusted once, as soon as seen,
But cautious age suspects the flatt'ring form,
And only credits what experience tells.
Has silence press'd her seal upon his lips?
Does adamantine faith invest his heart?
Will he not bend beneath a tyrant's frown?
Will he not melt before ambition's fire?
Will he not soften in a friend's embrace?
Or flow dissolving in a woman's tears?

DEMETRIUS

Sooner the trembling leaves shall find a voice,
And tell the secrets of their conscious walks;
Sooner the breeze shall catch the flying sounds,
And shock the tyrant with a tale of treason.
Your slaughter'd multitudes, that swell the shore
With monuments of death, proclaim his courage;
Virtue and liberty engross his soul,
And leave no place for perfidy, or fear.

LEONTIUS

I scorn a trust unwillingly repos'd;
Demetrius will not lead me to dishonour;
Consult in private, call me, when your scheme
Is ripe for action, and demands the sword. [*Going.*

DEMETRIUS

Leontius, stay.

CALI

Forgive an old man's weakness,
And share the deepest secrets of my soul,
My wrongs, my fears, my motives, my designs.—
When unsuccessful wars, and civil factions
Embroil'd the Turkish state, our sultan's father,
Great Amurath, at my request, forsook
The cloister's ease, resum'd the tott'ring throne,
And snatch'd the reins of abdicated pow'r
From giddy Mahomet's unskilful hand.
This fir'd the youthful king's ambitious breast:
He murmurs vengeance, at the name of Cali,
And dooms my rash fidelity to ruin.

DEMETRIUS

Unhappy lot of all that shine in courts,
For forc'd compliance, or for zealous virtue,
Still odious to the monarch, or the people.

CALI

Such are the woes, when arbitrary pow'r
And lawless passion hold the sword of justice,
If there be any land, as fame reports,
Where common laws restrain the prince and subject,
A happy land, where circulating pow'r
Flows through each member of th' embodied state;
Sure, not unconscious of the mighty blessing,
Her grateful sons shine bright with every virtue;
Untainted with the lust of innovation,
Sure, all unite to hold her league of rule
Unbroken, as the sacred chain of nature
That links the jarring elements in peace.

LEONTIUS

But say, great bassa, why the sultan's anger,
Burning in vain, delays the stroke of death?

CALI

Young, and unsettled in his father's kingdoms,
Fierce as he was, he dreaded to destroy
The empire's darling, and the soldier's boast;
But now confirm'd, and swelling with his conquests,
Secure, he tramples my declining fame,
Frowns unrestrain'd, and dooms me with his eyes.

DEMETRIUS

What can reverse thy doom?

CALI

The tyrant's death.

DEMETRIUS

But Greece is still forgot.

CALI

On Asia's coast,
Which lately bless'd my gentle government,
Soon as the sultan's unexpected fate
Fills all th' astonish'd empire with confusion,
My policy shall raise an easy throne;
The Turkish pow'rs from Europe shall retreat,
And harass Greece no more with wasteful war.
A galley mann'd with Greeks, thy charge, Leontius,
Attends to waft us to repose and safety.

DEMETRIUS

That vessel, if observ'd, alarms the court,
And gives a thousand fatal questions birth:
Why stor'd for flight? and why prepar'd by Cali?

CALI

This hour I'll beg, with unsuspecting face,
Leave to perform my pilgrimage to Mecca;
Which granted, hides my purpose from the world,
And, though refus'd, conceals it from the sultan.

LEONTIUS

How can a single hand attempt a life,
Which armies guard, and citadels enclose?

CALI

Forgetful of command, with captive beauties,
Far from his troops, he toys his hours away.
A roving soldier seiz'd, in Sophia's temple,
A virgin, shining with distinguish'd charms,
And brought his beauteous plunder to the sultan—

DEMETRIUS

In Sophia's temple!—What alarm!—Proceed.

CALI

The sultan gaz'd, he wonder'd, and he lov'd:
In passion lost, he bade the conqu'ring fair
Renounce her faith, and be the queen of Turkey:
The pious maid, with modest indignation,
Threw back the glitt'ring bribe.

DEMETRIUS

Celestial goodness!
It must, it must be she;—her name?

CALI

Aspasia.

DEMETRIUS

What hopes, what terrours, rush upon my soul!
O lead me quickly to the scene of fate;
Break through the politician's tedious forms;
Aspasia calls me, let me fly to save her.

LEONTIUS

Did Mahomet reproach, or praise her virtue?

CALI

His offers, oft repeated, still refus'd,
At length rekindled his accustom'd fury,
And chang'd th' endearing smile, and am'rous whisper
To threats of torture, death, and violation.

DEMETRIUS

These tedious narratives of frozen age
Distract my soul;—despatch thy ling'ring tale;
Say, did a voice from heav'n restrain the tyrant?
Did interposing angels guard her from him?

CALI

Just in the moment of impending fate,
Another plund'rer brought the bright Irene;
Of equal beauty, but of softer mien,
Fear in her eye, submission on her tongue,

Her mournful charms attracted his regards,
Disarm'd his rage, and, in repeated visits,
Gain'd all his heart; at length, his eager love
To her transferr'd the offer of a crown.

LEONTIUS

Nor found again the bright temptation fail?

CALI

Trembling to grant, nor daring to refuse,
While heav'n and Mahomet divide her fears,
With coy caresses and with pleasing wiles
She feeds his hopes, and sooths him to delay.
For her, repose is banish'd from the night,
And bus'ness from the day: in her apartments
He lives——

LEONTIUS

And there must fall.

CALI

But yet, th' attempt
Is hazardous.

LEONTIUS

Forbear to speak of hazards;
What has the wretch, that has surviv'd his country,
His friends, his liberty, to hazard?

CALI

Life.

DEMETRIUS

Th' inestimable privilege of breathing!
Important hazard! What's that airy bubble,

When weigh'd with Greece, with virtue, with Aspasia?—
A floating atom, dust that falls, unheeded,
Into the adverse scale, nor shakes the balance.

CALI

At least, this day be calm — If we succeed,
Aspasia's thine, and all thy life is rapture.—
See! Mustapha, the tyrant's minion, comes;
Invest Leontius with his new command;
And wait Abdalla's unsuspected visits:
Remember freedom, glory, Greece, and love.
[*Exeunt* Demetrius *and* Leontius.

SCENE III

CALI, MUSTAPHA

MUSTAPHA

By what enchantment does this lovely Greek
Hold in her chains the captivated sultan?
He tires his fav'rites with Irene's praise,
And seeks the shades to muse upon Irene;
Irene steals, unheeded, from his tongue,
And mingles, unperceiv'd, with ev'ry thought.

CALI

Why should the sultan shun the joys of beauty,
Or arm his breast against the force of love?
Love, that with sweet vicissitude relieves
The warriour's labours and the monarch's cares.
But, will she yet receive the faith of Mecca?

MUSTAPHA

Those pow'rful tyrants of the female breast,
Fear and ambition, urge her to compliance;
Dress'd in each charm of gay magnificence,
Alluring grandeur courts her to his arms,
Religion calls her from the wish'd embrace,
Paints future joys, and points to distant glories.

CALI

Soon will th' unequal contest be decided.
Prospects, obscur'd by distance, faintly strike;
Each pleasure brightens, at its near approach,
And ev'ry danger shocks with double horrour.

MUSTAPHA

How shall I scorn the beautiful apostate!
How will the bright Aspasia shine above her!

CALI

Should she, for proselytes are always zealous,
With pious warmth receive our prophet's law—

MUSTAPHA

Heav'n will contemn the mercenary fervour,
Which love of greatness, not of truth, inflames.

CALI

Cease, cease thy censures; for the sultan comes
Alone, with am'rous haste to seek his love.

SCENE IV

MAHOMET, CALI, MUSTAPHA

CALI

Hail! terrour of the monarchs of the world;
Unshaken be thy throne, as earth's firm base;
Live, till the sun forgets to dart his beams,
And weary planets loiter in their courses!

MAHOMET

But, Cali, let Irene share thy prayers;
For what is length of days, without Irene?
I come from empty noise, and tasteless pomp,
From crowds, that hide a monarch from himself,
To prove the sweets of privacy and friendship,
And dwell upon the beauties of Irene.

CALI

O may her beauties last, unchang'd by time,
As those that bless the mansions of the good!

MAHOMET

Each realm, where beauty turns the graceful shape,
Swells the fair breast, or animates the glance,
Adorns my palace with its brightest virgins;
Yet, unacquainted with these soft emotions,
I walk'd superiour through the blaze of charms,
Prais'd without rapture, left without regret.
Why rove I now, when absent from my fair,
From solitude to crowds, from crowds to solitude,
Still restless, till I clasp the lovely maid,
And ease my loaded soul upon her bosom?

MUSTAPHA

Forgive, great sultan, that intrusive duty
Inquires the final doom of Menodorus,
The Grecian counsellor.

MAHOMET

Go, see him die;
His martial rhet'rick taught the Greeks resistance;
Had they prevail'd, I ne'er had known Irene.
[*Exit* Mustapha.

SCENE V

MAHOMET, CALI

MAHOMET

Remote from tumult, in th' adjoining palace,
Thy care shall guard this treasure of my soul:
There let Aspasia, since my fair entreats it,
With converse chase the melancholy moments.
Sure, chill'd with sixty winter camps, thy blood,
At sight of female charms, will glow no more.

CALI

These years, unconquer'd Mahomet, demand
Desires more pure, and other cares than love.
Long have I wish'd, before our prophet's tomb,
To pour my pray'rs for thy successful reign,
To quit the tumults of the noisy camp,
And sink into the silent grave in peace.

MAHOMET

What! think of peace, while haughty Scanderbeg,
Elate with conquest, in his native mountains,
Prowls o'er the wealthy spoils of bleeding Turkey!

While fair Hungaria's unexhausted valleys
Pour forth their legions; and the roaring Danube
Rolls half his floods, unheard, through shouting camps!
Nor could'st thou more support a life of sloth
Than Amurath——

CALI

Still, full of Amurath! [*Aside.*

MAHOMET

Than Amurath, accustom'd to command,
Could bear his son upon the Turkish throne.

CALI

This pilgrimage our lawgiver ordain'd—

MAHOMET

For those, who could not please by nobler service.—
Our warlike prophet loves an active faith.
The holy flame of enterprising virtue
Mocks the dull vows of solitude and penance,
And scorns the lazy hermit's cheap devotion.
Shine thou, distinguish'd by superiour merit;
With wonted zeal pursue the task of war,
Till ev'ry nation reverence the koran,
And ev'ry suppliant lift his eyes to Mecca.

CALI

This regal confidence, this pious ardour,
Let prudence moderate, though not suppress.
Is not each realm, that smiles with kinder suns,
Or boasts a happier soil, already thine?
Extended empire, like expanded gold,
Exchanges solid strength for feeble splendour.

MAHOMET

Preach thy dull politicks to vulgar kings,
Thou know'st not yet thy master's future greatness,
His vast designs, his plans of boundless pow'r.
When ev'ry storm in my domain shall roar,
When ev'ry wave shall beat a Turkish shore;
Then, Cali, shall the toils of battle cease,
Then dream of pray'r, and pilgrimage, and peace.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.—SCENE I

ASPASIA, IRENE

IRENE

ASPASIA, yet pursue the sacred theme;
Exhaust the stores of pious eloquence,
And teach me to repel the sultan's passion.
Still, at Aspasia's voice, a sudden rapture
Exalts my soul, and fortifies my heart;
The glitt'ring vanities of empty greatness,
The hopes and fears, the joys and pains of life,
Dissolve in air, and vanish into nothing.

ASPASIA

Let nobler hopes and juster fears succeed,
And bar the passes of Irene's mind
Against returning guilt.

IRENE

When thou art absent,
Death rises to my view, with all his terrours;
Then visions, horrid as a murd'rer's dreams,

Chill my resolves, and blast my blooming virtue:
Stern torture shakes his bloody scourge before me,
And anguish gnashes on the fatal wheel.

ASPASIA

Since fear predominates in every thought,
And sways thy breast with absolute dominion,
Think on th' insulting scorn, the conscious pangs,
The future mis'ries, that wait th' apostate;
So shall timidity assist thy reason,
And wisdom into virtue turn thy frailty.

IRENE

Will not that pow'r, that form'd the heart of woman,
And wove the feeble texture of her nerves,
Forgive those fears that shake the tender frame?

ASPASIA

The weakness we lament, ourselves create;
Instructed, from our infant years, to court,
With counterfeited fears, the aid of man,
We learn to shudder at the rustling breeze,
Start at the light, and tremble in the dark;
Till, affectation ripening to belief,
And folly, frighted at her own chimeras,
Habitual cowardice usurps the soul.

IRENE

Not all, like thee, can brave the shocks of fate.
Thy soul, by nature great, enlarg'd by knowledge,
Soars unincumber'd with our idle cares,
And all Aspasia, but her beauty's man.

ASPASIA

Each gen'rous sentiment is thine, Demetrius,
Whose soul, perhaps, yet mindful of Aspasia,
Now hovers o'er this melancholy shade,
Well pleas'd to find thy precepts not forgotten.
Oh! could the grave restore the pious hero,
Soon would his art or valour set us free,
And bear us far from servitude and crimes.

IRENE

He yet may live.

ASPASIA

Alas! delusive dream!
Too well I know him; his immoderate courage,
Th' impetuous sallies of excessive virtue,
Too strong for love, have hurried him on death.

SCENE II

Aspasia, Irene, Cali, Abdalla

CALI *to* ABDALLA, *as they advance.*

Behold our future sultaness, Abdalla;—
Let artful flatt'ry now, to lull suspicion,
Glide, through Irene, to the sultan's ear.
Would'st thou subdue th' obdurate cannibal
To tender friendship, praise him to his mistress.

[*To* IRENE]

Well may those eyes, that view these heav'nly charms,
Reject the daughters of contending kings;
For what are pompous titles, proud alliance,
Empire or wealth, to excellence like thine?

ABDALLA

Receive th' impatient sultan to thy arms;
And may a long posterity of monarchs,
The pride and terrour of succeeding days,
Rise from the happy bed; and future queens
Diffuse Irene's beauty through the world!

IRENE

Can Mahomet's imperial hand descend
To clasp a slave? or can a soul, like mine,
Unus'd to pow'r, and form'd for humbler scenes,
Support the splendid miseries of greatness?

CALI

No regal pageant, deck'd with casual honours,
Scorn'd by his subjects, trampled by his foes;
No feeble tyrant of a petty state,
Courts thee to shake on a dependant throne;
Born to command, as thou to charm mankind,
The sultan from himself derives his greatness.
Observe, bright maid, as his resistless voice
Drives on the tempest of destructive war,
How nation after nation falls before him.

ABDALLA

At his dread name the distant mountains shake
Their cloudy summits, and the sons of fierceness,
That range uncivilized from rock to rock,
Distrust th' eternal fortresses of nature,
And wish their gloomy caverns more obscure.

ASPASIA

Forbear this lavish pomp of dreadful praise;
The horrid images of war and slaughter
Renew our sorrows, and awake our fears.

ADBALLA

Cali, methinks yon waving trees afford
A doubtful glimpse of our approaching friends;
Just as I mark'd them, they forsook the shore,
And turn'd their hasty steps towards the garden.

CALI

Conduct these queens, Abdalla, to the palace:
Such heav'nly beauty, form'd for adoration,
The pride of monarchs, the reward of conquest!
Such beauty must not shine to vulgar eyes.

SCENE III

CALI, *solus*

How heav'n, in scorn of human arrogance,
Commits to trivial chance the fate of nations!
While, with incessant thought, laborious man
Extends his mighty schemes of wealth and pow'r,
And towers and triumphs in ideal greatness;
Some accidental gust of opposition
Blasts all the beauties of his new creation,
O'erturns the fabrick of presumptuous reason,
And whelms the swelling architect beneath it.
Had not the breeze untwin'd the meeting boughs,
And, through the parted shade, disclos'd the Greeks,
Th' important hour had pass'd, unheeded, by,
In all the sweet oblivion of delight,

In all the fopperies of meeting lovers;
In sighs and tears, in transports and embraces,
In soft complaints, and idle protestations.

SCENE IV

Cali, Demetrius, Leontius

CALI

Could omens fright the resolute and wise,
Well might we fear impending disappointments.

LEONTIUS

Your artful suit, your monarch's fierce denial,
The cruel doom of hapless Menodorus——

DEMETRIUS

And your new charge, that dear, that heav'nly maid——

LEONTIUS

All this we know already from Abdalla.

DEMETRIUS

Such slight defeats but animate the brave
To stronger efforts and maturer counsels.

CALI

My doom confirm'd establishes my purpose.
Calmly he heard, till Amurath's resumption
Rose to his thought, and set his soul on fire:
When from his lips the fatal name burst out,
A sudden pause th imperfect sense suspended,
Like the dread stillness of condensing storms.

DEMETRIUS

The loudest cries of nature urge us forward;
Despotick rage pursues the life of Cali;

His groaning country claims Leontius' aid;
And yet another voice, forgive me, Greece,
The pow'rful voice of love, inflames Demetrius;
Each ling'ring hour alarms me for Aspasia.

CALI

What passions reign among thy crew, Leontius?
Does cheerless diffidence oppress their hearts?
Or sprightly hope exalt their kindling spirits?
Do they, with pain, repress the struggling shout,
And listen eager to the rising wind?

LEONTIUS

All there is hope, and gaiety, and courage,
No cloudy doubts, or languishing delays;
Ere I could range them on the crowded deck,
At once a hundred voices thunder'd round me,
And ev'ry voice was liberty and Greece.

DEMETRIUS

Swift let us rush upon the careless tyrant,
Nor give him leisure for another crime.

LEONTIUS

Then let us now resolve, nor idly waste
Another hour in dull deliberation.

CALI

But see, where destin'd to protract our counsels,
Comes Mustapha.—Your Turkish robes conceal you.
Retire with speed, while I prepare to meet him
With artificial smiles, and seeming friendship.

SCENE V

CALI, MUSTAPHA

CALI

I see the gloom, that low'rs upon thy brow;
These days of love and pleasure charm not thee;
Too slow these gentle constellations roll;
Thou long'st for stars, that frown on human kind,
And scatter discord from their baleful beams.

MUSTAPHA

How blest art thou, still jocund and serene,
Beneath the load of business, and of years!

CALI

Sure, by some wond'rous sympathy of souls,
My heart still beats responsive to the sultan's;
I share, by secret instinct, all his joys,
And feel no sorrow, while my sov'reign smiles.

MUSTAPHA

The sultan comes, impatient for his love;
Conduct her hither; let no rude intrusion
Molest these private walks, or care invade
These hours, assign'd to pleasure and Irene.

SCENE VI

MAHOMET, MUSTAPHA

MAHOMET

Now, Mustapha, pursue thy tale of horrour.
Has treason's dire infection reach'd my palace?
Can Cali dare the stroke of heav'nly justice,

In the dark precincts of the gaping grave,
And load with perjuries his parting soul?
Was it for this, that, sick'ning in Epirus,
My father call'd me to his couch of death,
Join'd Cali's hand to mine, and falt'ring cried,
Restrain the fervour of impetuous youth
With venerable Cali's faithful counsels?
Are these the counsels, this the faith of Cali?
Were all our favours lavish'd on a villain?
Confest?——

MUSTAPHA

Confest by dying Menodorus.
In his last agonies, the gasping coward,
Amidst the tortures of the burning steel,
Still fond of life, groan'd out the dreadful secret,
Held forth this fatal scroll, then sunk to nothing.

MAHOMET, *examining the paper*

His correspondence with our foes of Greece!
His hand! his seal! The secrets of my soul,
Conceal'd from all but him! All, all conspire
To banish doubt, and brand him for a villain!
Our schemes for ever cross'd, our mines dis-
cover'd,
Betray'd some traitor lurking near my bosom.
Oft have I rag'd, when their wide-wasting cannon
Lay pointed at our batt'ries yet unform'd,
And broke the meditated lines of war.
Detested Cali, too, with artful wonder,
Would shake his wily head, and closely whisper,
Beware of Mustapha, beware of treason.

MUSTAPHA

The faith of Mustapha disdains suspicion;
But yet, great emperour, beware of treason;
Th' insidious bassa, fir'd by disappointment—

MAHOMET

Shall feel the vengeance of an injur'd king.
Go, seize him, load him with reproachful chains;
Before th' assembled troops, proclaim his crimes;
Then leave him, stretch'd upon the ling'ring rack,
Amidst the camp to howl his life away.

MUSTAPHA

Should we, before the troops, proclaim his crimes,
I dread his arts of seeming innocence,
His bland address, and sorcery of tongue;
And, should he fall, unheard, by sudden justice,
Th' adoring soldiers would revenge their idol.

MAHOMET

Cali, this day, with hypocritick zeal,
Implor'd my leave to visit Mecca's temple;
Struck with the wonder of a statesman's goodness,
I rais'd his thoughts to more sublime devotion.
Now let him go, pursu'd by silent wrath,
Meet unexpected daggers in his way,
And, in some distant land, obscurely die.

MUSTAPHA

There will his boundless wealth, the spoil of Asia,
Heap'd by your father's ill-plac'd bounties on him,
Disperse rebellion through the eastern world;
Bribe to his cause, and list beneath his banners,

Arabia's roving troops, the sons of swiftness,
And arm the Persian heretick against thee;
There shall he waste thy frontiers, check thy conquests,
And, though at length subdued, elude thy vengeance.

MAHOMET

Elude my vengeance! No—My troops shall range
Th' eternal snows that freeze beyond Mæotis,
And Africk's torrid sands, in search of Cali.
Should the fierce north, upon his frozen wings,
Bear him aloft, above the wond'ring clouds,
And seat him in the pleiads' golden chariots,
Thence shall my fury drag him down to tortures;
Wherever guilt can fly, revenge can follow.

MUSTAPHA

Wilt thou dismiss the savage from the toils,
Only to hunt him round the ravag'd world?

MAHOMET

Suspend his sentence—Empire and Irene
Claim my divided soul. This wretch, unworthy
To mix with nobler cares, I'll throw aside
For idle hours, and crush him at my leisure.

MUSTAPHA

Let not th' unbounded greatness of his mind
Betray my king to negligence of danger.
Perhaps, the clouds of dark conspiracy
Now roll, full fraught with thunder, o'er your head.
Twice, since the morning rose, I saw the bassa,
Like a fell adder swelling in a brake,

Beneath the covert of this verdant arch,
In private conference; beside him stood
Two men unknown, the partners of his bosom;
I mark'd them well, and trac'd in either face
The gloomy resolution, horrid greatness,
And stern composure, of despairing heroes;
And, to confirm my thoughts, at sight of me,
As blasted by my presence, they withdrew,
With all the speed of terrour and of guilt.

MAHOMET

The strong emotions of my troubled soul
Allow no pause for art or for contrivance;
And dark perplexity distracts my counsels.
Do thou resolve: for, see, Irene comes!
At her approach each ruder gust of thought
Sinks, like the sighing of a tempest spent,
And gales of softer passion fan my bosom.

[Cali *enters with* Irene, *and exit with* Mustapha.

SCENE VII

MAHOMET, IRENE

MAHOMET

Wilt thou descend, fair daughter of perfection,
To hear my vows, and give mankind a queen?
Ah! cease, Irene, cease those flowing sorrows,
That melt a heart impregnable till now,
And turn thy thoughts, henceforth, to love and empire.
How will the matchless beauties of Irene,
Thus bright in tears, thus amiable in ruin,

With all the graceful pride of greatness heighten'd,
Amidst the blaze of jewels and of gold,
Adorn a throne, and dignify dominion!

IRENE

Why all this glare of splendid eloquence,
To paint the pageantries of guilty state?
Must I, for these, renounce the hope of heav'n,
Immortal crowns, and fulness of enjoyment?

MAHOMET

Vain raptures all—For your inferiour natures,
Form'd to delight, and happy by delighting,
Heav'n has reserv'd no future paradise,
But bids you rove the paths of bliss, secure
Of total death, and careless of hereafter;
While heaven's high minister, whose awful volume
Records each act, each thought of sov'reign man,
Surveys your plays with inattentive glance,
And leaves the lovely trifler unregarded.

IRENE

Why then has nature's vain munificence
Profusely pour'd her bounties upon woman?
Whence, then, those charms thy tongue has deign'd
to flatter,
That air resistless, and enchanting blush,
Unless the beauteous fabrick was design'd
A habitation for a fairer soul?

MAHOMET

Too high, bright maid, thou rat'st exteriour grace:
Not always do the fairest flow'rs diffuse

The richest odours, nor the speckled shells
Conceal the gem; let female arrogance
Observe the feather'd wand'rers of the sky;
With purple varied, and bedrop'd with gold,
They prune the wing, and spread the glossy plumes,
Ordain'd, like you, to flutter and to shine,
And cheer the weary passenger with musick.

IRENE

Mean as we are, this tyrant of the world
Implores our smiles, and trembles at our feet.
Whence flow the hopes and fears, despair and rapture,
Whence all the bliss and agonies of love?

MAHOMET

Why, when the balm of sleep descends on man,
Do gay delusions, wand'ring o'er the brain,
Sooth the delighted soul with empty bliss?
To want, give affluence? and to slav'ry, freedom?
Such are love's joys, the lenitives of life,
A fancy'd treasure, and a waking dream.

IRENE

Then let me once, in honour of our sex,
Assume the boastful arrogance of man.
Th' attractive softness, and th' endearing smile,
And pow'rful glance, 'tis granted, are our own;
Nor has impartial nature's frugal hand
Exhausted all her nobler gifts on you.
Do not we share the comprehensive thought,
Th' enlivening wit, the penetrating reason?
Beats not the female breast with gen'rous passions,
The thirst of empire, and the love of glory?

MAHOMET

Illustrious maid, new wonders fix me thine;
Thy soul completes the triumphs of thy face.
I thought (forgive, my fair,) the noblest aim,
The strongest effort of a female soul,
Was but to choose the graces of the day;
To tune the tongue, to teach the eyes to roll,
Dispose the colours of the flowing robe,
And add new roses to the faded cheek.
Will it not charm a mind, like thine, exalted,
To shine, the goddess of applauding nations;
To scatter happiness and plenty round thee,
To bid the prostrate captive rise and live,
To see new cities tow'r, at thy command,
And blasted kingdoms flourish, at thy smile?

IRENE

Charm'd with the thought of blessing human kind,
Too calm I listen to the flatt'ring sounds.

MAHOMET

O! seize the power to bless—Irene's nod
Shall break the fetters of the groaning christian;
Greece, in her lovely patroness secure,
Shall mourn no more her plunder'd palaces.

IRENE

Forbear—O! do not urge me to my ruin!

MAHOMET

To state and pow'r I court thee, not to ruin:
Smile on my wishes, and command the globe.

Security shall spread her shield before thee,
And love infold thee with his downy wings.
If greatness please thee, mount th' imperial seat;
If pleasure charm thee, view this soft retreat;
Here ev'ry warbler of the sky shall sing;
Here ev'ry fragrance breathe of ev'ry spring:
To deck these bow'rs each region shall combine,
And e'en our prophet's gardens envy thine:
Empire and love shall share the blissful day,
And varied life steal, unperceiv'd, away.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.—SCENE I

CALI, ABDALLA

[CALI *enters, with a discontented air; to him enters* ABDALLA]

CALI

Is this the fierce conspirator, Abdalla?
Is this the restless diligence of treason? [hours
Where hast thou linger'd, while th' incumber'd
Fly, lab'ring with the fate of future nations,
And hungry slaughter scents imperial blood?

ABDALLA

Important cares detain'd me from your counsels.

CALI

Some petty passion! some domestick trifle!
Some vain amusement of a vacant soul!
A weeping wife, perhaps, or dying friend,
Hung on your neck, and hinder'd your departure.

Is this a time for softness or for sorrow ?
Unprofitable, peaceful, female virtues!
When eager vengeance shows a naked foe,
And kind ambition points the way to greatness.

ABDALLA

Must then ambition's votaries infringe
The laws of kindness, break the bonds of nature,
And quit the names of brother, friend, and father ?

CALI

This sov'reign passion, scornful of restraint,
E'en from the birth, affects supreme command,
Swells in the breast, and, with resistless force,
O'erbears each gentler motion of the mind:
As, when a deluge overspreads the plains,
The wand'ring rivulet, and silver lake,
Mix undistinguish'd with the gen'ral roar.

ABDALLA

Yet can ambition, in Abdalla's breast,
Claim but the second place: there mighty love
Has fixed his hopes, inquietudes, and fears,
His glowing wishes, and his jealous pangs.

CALI

Love is, indeed, the privilege of youth;
Yet, on a day like this, when expectation
Pants for the dread event—But let us reason—

ABDALLA

Hast thou grown old, amidst the crowd of courts,
And turn'd th' instructive page of human life,
To cant, at last, of reason to a lover ?

Such ill-tim'd gravity, such serious folly,
Might well befit the solitary student,
Th' unpractis'd dervis, or sequester'd faquir.
Know'st thou not yet, when love invades the soul,
That all her faculties receive his chains?
That reason gives her sceptre to his hand,
Or only struggles to be more enslav'd?
Aspasia, who can look upon thy beauties?
Who hear thee speak, and not abandon reason?
Reason! the hoary dotard's dull directress,
That loses all, because she hazards nothing!
Reason! the tim'rous pilot, that, to shun
The rocks of life, for ever flies the port!

CALI

But why this sudden warmth?

ABDALLA

Because I love:
Because my slighted passion burns in vain!
Why roars the lioness, distress'd by hunger?
Why foam the swelling waves, when tempests rise?
Why shakes the ground, when subterraneous fires
Fierce through the bursting caverns rend their way?

CALI

Not till this day, thou saw'st this fatal fair;
Did ever passion make so swift a progress?
Once more reflect; suppress this infant folly.

ABDALLA

Gross fires, enkindled by a mortal hand,
Spread, by degrees, and dread th' oppressing stream;

The subtler flames, emitted from the sky,
Flash out at once, with strength above resistance.

CALI

How did Aspasia welcome your address?
Did you proclaim this unexpected conquest?
Or pay, with speaking eyes, a lover's homage?

ABDALLA

Confounded, aw'd, and lost in admiration,
I gaz'd, I trembled; but I could not speak;
When e'en, as love was breaking off from wonder,
And tender accents quiver'd on my lips,
She mark'd my sparkling eyes, and heaving breast,
And smiling, conscious of her charms, withdrew.
[*Enter* Demetrius *and* Leontius.

CALI

Now be, some moments, master of thyself;
Nor let Demetrius know thee for a rival.
Hence! or be calm—To disagree is ruin.

SCENE II

Cali, Demetrius, Leontius, Abdalla

DEMETRIUS

When will occasion smile upon our wishes,
And give the tortures of suspense a period?
Still must we linger in uncertain hope?
Still languish in our chains, and dream of freedom,
Like thirsty sailors gazing on the clouds,
Till burning death shoots through their wither'd limbs?

CALI

Deliverance is at hand; for Turkey's tyrant,
Sunk in his pleasures, confident and gay,
With all the hero's dull security,
Trusts to my care his mistress and his life,
And laughs, and wantons in the jaws of death.

LEONTIUS

So weak is man, when destin'd to destruction!—
The watchful slumber, and the crafty trust.

CALI

At my command, yon iron gates unfold;
At my command, the sentinels retire;
With all the license of authority,
Through bowing slaves, I range the private rooms,
And of to-morrow's action fix the scene.

DEMETRIUS

To-morrow's action! Can that hoary wisdom,
Borne down with years, still dote upon to-morrow?
That fatal mistress of the young, the lazy,
The coward, and the fool, condemn'd to lose
An useless life, in waiting for to-morrow,
To gaze with longing eyes upon to-morrow,
Till interposing death destroys the prospect!
Strange! that this gen'ral fraud, from day to day,
Should fill the world with wretches undetected.
The soldier, lab'ring through a winter's march,
Still sees to-morrow drest in robes of triumph;
Still to the lover's long-expecting arms
To-morrow brings the visionary bride.

But thou, too old to bear another cheat,
Learn, that the present hour alone is man's.

LEONTIUS

The present hour, with open arms, invites;
Seize the kind fair, and press her to thy bosom.

DEMETRIUS

Who knows, ere this important morrow rise,
But fear or mutiny may taint the Greeks?
Who knows, if Mahomet's awaking anger
May spare the fatal bowstring till to-morrow?

ABDALLA

Had our first Asian foes but known this ardour,
We still had wander'd on Tartarian hills.
Rouse, Cali; shall the sons of conquer'd Greece
Lead us to danger, and abash their victors?
This night, with all her conscious stars, be witness,
Who merits most, Demetrius or Abdalla.

DEMETRIUS

Who merits most!—I knew not, we were rivals.

CALI

Young man, forbear—the heat of youth, no more—
Well,—'tis decreed—This night shall fix our fate.
Soon as the veil of ev'ning clouds the sky,
With cautious secrecy, Leontius, steer
Th' appointed vessel to yon shaded bay,
Form'd by this garden jutting on the deep;
There, with your soldiers arm'd, and sails expanded,
Await our coming, equally prepar'd
For speedy flight, or obstinate defence.

[*Exit* Leont.

SCENE III

Cali, Abdalla, Demetrius

DEMETRIUS

Now pause, great bassa, from the thoughts of blood,
And kindly grant an ear to gentler sounds.
If e'er thy youth has known the pangs of absence,
Or felt th' impatience of obstructed love,
Give me, before th' approaching hour of fate,
Once to behold the charms of bright Aspasia,
And draw new virtue from her heav'nly tongue.

CALI

Let prudence, ere the suit be farther urg'd,
Impartial weigh the pleasure with the danger.
A little longer, and she's thine for ever.

DEMETRIUS

Prudence and love conspire in this request,
Lest, unacquainted with our bold attempt,
Surprise o'erwhelm her, and retard our flight.

CALI

What I can grant, you cannot ask in vain—

DEMETRIUS

I go to wait thy call; this kind consent
Completes the gift of freedom and of life.
[*Exit* Dem.

SCENE IV

Cali, Abdalla

ABDALLA

And this is my reward—to burn, to languish,
To rave, unheeded; while the happy Greek,
The refuse of our swords, the dross of conquest,
Throws his fond arms about Aspasia's neck,
Dwells on her lips, and sighs upon her breast.
Is't not enough, he lives by our indulgence,
But he must live to make his masters wretched?

CALI

What claim hast thou to plead?

ABDALLA

The claim of pow'r,
Th' unquestion'd claim of conquerors and kings!

CALI

Yet, in the use of pow'r, remember justice.

ABDALLA

Can then th' assassin lift his treach'rous hand
Against his king, and cry, remember justice?
Justice demands the forfeit life of Cali;
Justice demands that I reveal your crimes;
Justice demands—but see th' approaching sultan!
Oppose my wishes, and—remember justice.

CALI

Disorder sits upon thy face—retire.

[*Exit* Abdalla; *enter* Mahomet.

SCENE V

Cali, Mahomet

CALI

Long be the sultan bless'd with happy love !
My zeal marks gladness dawning on thy cheek,
With raptures, such as fire the pagan crowds,
When, pale and anxious for their years to come,
They see the sun surmount the dark eclipse,
And hail, unanimous, their conqu'ring god.

MAHOMET

My vows, 'tis true, she hears with less aversion;
She sighs, she blushes, but she still denies.

CALI

With warmer courtship press the yielding fair:
Call to your aid, with boundless promises,
Each rebel wish, each traitor inclination,
That raises tumults in the female breast,
The love of pow'r, of pleasure, and of show.

MAHOMET

These arts I try'd, and, to inflame her more,
By hateful business hurried from her sight,
I bade a hundred virgins wait around her,
Sooth her with all the pleasures of command,
Applaud her charms, and court her to be great.
[*Exit* Mahomet.

SCENE VI

Cali, *solus*

He's gone—Here rest, my soul, thy fainting wing;
Here recollect thy dissipated pow'rs.—
Our distant int'rests, and our diff'rent passions,
Now haste to mingle in one common centre.
And fate lies crowded in a narrow space.
Yet, in that narrow space what dangers rise !—
Far more I dread Abdalla's fiery folly,
Than all the wisdom of the grave divan.
Reason with reason fights on equal terms;
The raging madman's unconnected schemes
We cannot obviate, for we cannot guess.
Deep in my breast be treasur'd this resolve,
When Cali mounts the throne, Abdalla dies,
Too fierce, too faithless, for neglect or trust.

[*Enter* Irene *with attendants.*

SCENE VII

Cali, Irene, Aspasia, &c.

CALI

Amidst the splendour of encircling beauty,
Superiour majesty proclaims thee queen,
And nature justifies our monarch's choice.

IRENE

Reserve this homage for some other fair;
Urge me not on to glitt'ring guilt, nor pour
In my weak ear th' intoxicating sounds.

CALI

Make haste, bright maid, to rule the willing world;
Aw'd by the rigour of the sultan's justice,
We court thy gentleness.

ASPASIA

Can Cali's voice
Concur to press a hapless captive's ruin!

CALI

Long would my zeal for Mahomet and thee
Detain me here. But nations call upon me,
And duty bids me choose a distant walk,
Nor taint with care the privacies of love.

SCENE VIII

IRENE, ASPASIA, *attendants*

ASPASIA

If yet this shining pomp, these sudden honours,
Swell not thy soul, beyond advice or friendship,
Nor yet inspire the follies of a queen,
Or tune thine ear to soothing adulation,
Suspend awhile the privilege of pow'r,
To hear the voice of truth; dismiss thy train,
Shake off th' incumbrances of state, a moment,
And lay the tow'ring sultaness aside,
Irene *signs to her attendants to retire.*
While I foretell thy fate: that office done,—
No more I boast th' ambitious name of friend,
But sink among thy slaves, without a murmur.

IRENE

Did regal diadems invest my brow,
Yet should my soul, still faithful to her choice,
Esteem Aspasia's breast the noblest kingdom.

ASPASIA

The soul, once tainted with so foul a crime, [dour:
No more shall glow with friendship's hallow'd ar-
Those holy beings, whose superiour care
Guides erring mortals to the paths of virtue,
Affrighted at impiety, like thine,
Resign their charge to baseness and to ruin°.

IRENE

Upbraid me not with fancied wickedness;
I am not yet a queen, or an apostate.
But should I sin beyond the hope of mercy,
If, when religion prompts me to refuse,
The dread of instant death restrains my tongue?

ASPASIA

Reflect, that life and death, affecting sounds!
Are only varied modes of endless being;

° In the original copy of this tragedy, given to Mr. Langton, the above speech is as follows; and, in Mr. Boswell's judgement, is finer than in the present editions:

"Nor think to say, here will I stop;
Here will I fix the limits of transgression,
Nor farther tempt the avenging rage of heaven.
When guilt, like this, once harbours in the breast,
Those holy beings, whose unseen direction
Guides, through the maze of life, the steps of man,
Fly the detested mansions of impiety,
And quit their charge to horrour and to ruin."

See Boswell, i. for other compared extracts from the first sketch.—Ed.

Reflect, that life, like ev'ry other blessing,
Derives its value from its use alone;
Not for itself, but for a nobler end,
Th' Eternal gave it, and that end is virtue.
When inconsistent with a greater good,
Reason commands to cast the less away:
Thus life, with loss of wealth, is well preserv'd,
And virtue cheaply sav'd, with less of life.

IRENE

If built on settled thought, this constancy
Not idly flutters on a boastful tongue,
Why, when destruction rag'd around our walls,
Why fled this haughty heroine from the battle?
Why, then, did not this warlike amazon
Mix in the war, and shine among the heroes!

ASPASIA

Heav'n, when its hand pour'd softness on our limbs,
Unfit for toil, and polish'd into weakness,
Made passive fortitude the praise of woman:
Our only arms are innocence and meekness.
Not then with raving cries I fill'd the city;
But, while Demetrius, dear, lamented name!
Pour'd storms of fire upon our fierce invaders,
Implor'd th' eternal pow'r to shield my country,
With silent sorrows, and with calm devotion.

IRENE

O! did Irene shine the queen of Turkey, [jected;
No more should Greece lament those pray'rs re-
Again, should golden splendour grace her cities,

Again, her prostrate palaces should rise,
Again, her temples sound with holy musick:
No more should danger fright, or want distress
The smiling widows, and protected orphans.

ASPASIA

Be virtuous ends pursued by virtuous means,
Nor think th' intention sanctifies the deed:
That maxim, publish'd in an impious age,
Would loose the wild enthusiast to destroy,
And fix the fierce usurper's bloody title;
Then bigotry might send her slaves to war,
And bid success become the test of truth:
Unpitying massacre might waste the world,
And persecution boast the call of heaven.

IRENE

Shall I not wish to cheer afflicted kings,
And plan the happiness of mourning millions?

ASPASIA

Dream not of pow'r, thou never canst attain:
When social laws first harmoniz'd the world,
Superiour man possess'd the charge of rule,
The scale of justice, and the sword of power,
Nor left us aught, but flattery and state.

IRENE

To me my lover's fondness will restore
Whate'er man's pride has ravish'd from our sex.

ASPASIA

When soft security shall prompt the sultan,
Freed from the tumults of unsettled conquest,

To fix his court, and regulate his pleasures,
Soon shall the dire seraglio's horrid gates
Close, like th' eternal bars of death, upon thee.
Immur'd, and buried in perpetual sloth,
That gloomy slumber of the stagnant soul,
There shalt thou view, from far, the quiet cottage,
And sigh for cheerful poverty in vain;
There wear the tedious hours of life away,
Beneath each curse of unrelenting heav'n,
Despair and slav'ry, solitude and guilt.

IRENE

There shall we find the yet untasted bliss
Of grandeur and tranquillity combin'd.

ASPASIA

Tranquillity and guilt, disjoin'd by heaven,
Still stretch in vain their longing arms afar;
Nor dare to pass th' insuperable bound.
Ah! let me rather seek the convent's cell;
There, when my thoughts, at interval of prayer,
Descend to range these mansions of misfortune,
Oft shall I dwell on our disastrous friendship,
And shed the pitying tear for lost Irene.

IRENE

Go, languish on in dull obscurity;
Thy dazzled soul, with all its boasted greatness,
Shrinks at th' o'erpow'ring gleams of regal state,
Stoops from the blaze, like a degen'rate eagle,
And flies for shelter to the shades of life.

ASPASIA

On me should providence, without a crime,
The weighty charge of royalty confer;
Call me to civilize the Russian wilds,
Or bid soft science polish Britain's heroes; [proach.
Soon should'st thou see, how false thy weak re-
My bosom feels, enkindled from the sky,
The lambent flames of mild benevolence,
Untouch'd by fierce ambition's raging fires.

IRENE

Ambition is the stamp, impress'd by heav'n
To mark the noblest minds; with active heat
Inform'd, they mount the precipice of pow'r,
Grasp at command, and tow'r in quest of empire;
While vulgar souls compassionate their cares,
Gaze at their height, and tremble at their danger:
Thus meaner spirits, with amazement, mark
The varying seasons, and revolving skies,
And ask, what guilty pow'r's rebellious hand
Rolls with eternal toil the pond'rous orbs;
While some archangel, nearer to perfection,
In easy state, presides o'er all their motions,
Directs the planets, with a careless nod,
Conducts the sun, and regulates the spheres.

ASPASIA

Well may'st thou hide in labyrinths of sound
The cause that shrinks from reason's pow'rful voice.
Stoop from thy flight, trace back th' entangled thought,
And set the glitt'ring fallacy to view.

Not pow'r I blame, but pow'r obtain'd by crime;
Angelick greatness is angelick virtue.
Amidst the glare of courts, the shout of armies,
Will not th' apostate feel the pangs of guilt,
And wish, too late, for innocence and peace,
Curst, as the tyrant of th' infernal realms,
With gloomy state and agonizing pomp?

SCENE IX

IRENE, ASPASIA, MAID

MAID

A Turkish stranger, of majestick mien,
Asks at the gate admission to Aspasia,
Commission'd, as he says, by Cali bassa.

IRENE

Whoe'er thou art, or whatsoe'er thy message,
[*Aside.*
Thanks for this kind relief—With speed admit him.

ASPASIA

He comes, perhaps, to separate us for ever;
When I am gone, remember, O! remember,
That none are great, or happy, but the virtuous.
[*Exit* Irene; *enter* Demetrius.

SCENE X

ASPASIA, DEMETRIUS

DEMETRIUS

'Tis she—my hope, my happiness, my love!
Aspasia! do I, once again, behold thee?

Still, still the same—unclouded by misfortune!
Let my blest eyes for ever gaze——

ASPASIA

Demetrius!

DEMETRIUS

Why does the blood forsake thy lovely cheek?
Why shoots this chilness through thy shaking nerves?
Why does thy soul retire into herself?
Recline upon my breast thy sinking beauties:
Revive — Revive to freedom and to love.

ASPASIA

What well-known voice pronounc'd the grateful sounds,
Freedom and love? Alas! I'm all confusion;
A sudden mist o'ercasts my darken'd soul;
The present, past, and future swim before me,
Lost in a wild perplexity of joy.

DEMETRIUS

Such ecstasy of love, such pure affection,
What worth can merit? or what faith reward?

ASPASIA

A thousand thoughts, imperfect and distracted,
Demand a voice, and struggle into birth;
A thousand questions press upon my tongue,
But all give way to rapture and Demetrius.

DEMETRIUS

O say, bright being, in this age of absence,
What fears, what griefs, what dangers, hast thou known?

Say, how the tyrant threaten'd, flatter'd, sigh'd!
Say, how he threaten'd, flatter'd, sigh'd in vain!
Say, how the hand of violence was rais'd!
Say, how thou call'dst in tears upon Demetrius!

ASPASIA

Inform me rather, how thy happy courage
Stemm'd in the breach the deluge of destruction,
And pass'd, uninjur'd, through the walks of death.
Did savage anger and licentious conquest
Behold the hero with Aspasia's eyes?
And, thus protected in the gen'ral ruin,
O! say, what guardian pow'r convey'd thee hither.

DEMETRIUS

Such strange events, such unexpected chances,
Beyond my warmest hope, or wildest wishes,
Concurr'd to give me to Aspasia's arms,
I stand amaz'd, and ask, if yet I clasp thee.

ASPASIA

Sure heav'n, (for wonders are not wrought in vain!)
That joins us thus, will never part us more.

SCENE XI

Demetrius, Aspasia, Abdalla

ABDALLA

It parts you now — The hasty sultan sign'd
The laws unread, and flies to his Irene.

DEMETRIUS

Fix'd and intent on his Irene's charms,
He envies none the converse of Aspasia.

ABDALLA

Aspasia's absence will inflame suspicion;
She cannot, must not, shall not, linger here;
Prudence and friendship bid me force her from you.

DEMETRIUS

Force her! profane her with a touch, and die!

ABDALLA

'Tis Greece, 'tis freedom, calls Aspasia hence;
Your careless love betrays your country's cause.

DEMETRIUS

If we must part——

ASPASIA

No! let us die together.

DEMETRIUS

If we must part——

ABDALLA

Despatch; th' increasing danger
Will not admit a lover's long farewell,
The long-drawn intercourse of sighs and kisses.

DEMETRIUS

Then—O! my fair, I cannot bid thee go.
Receive her, and protect her, gracious heav'n!
Yet let me watch her dear departing steps;
If fate pursues me, let it find me here.
Reproach not, Greece, a lover's fond delays,
Nor think thy cause neglected, while I gaze;
New force, new courage, from each glance I gain,
And find our passions not infus'd in vain.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.—SCENE I

Demetrius, Aspasia, *enter as talking.*

ASPASIA

Enough — resistless reason calms my soul—
Approving justice smiles upon your cause,
And nature's rights entreat th' asserting sword.
Yet, when your hand is lifted to destroy,
Think, but excuse a woman's needless caution,—
Purge well thy mind from ev'ry private passion,
Drive int'rest, love, and vengeance, from thy thoughts;
Fill all thy ardent breast with Greece and virtue;
Then strike secure, and heav'n assist the blow!

DEMETRIUS

Thou kind assistant of my better angel,
Propitious guide of my bewilder'd soul,
Calm of my cares, and guardian of my virtue!

ASPASIA

My soul, first kindled by thy bright example,
To noble thought and gen'rous emulation,
Now but reflects those beams that flow'd from thee.

DEMETRIUS

With native lustre and unborrow'd greatness,
Thou shin'st, bright maid, superiour to distress;
Unlike the trifling race of vulgar beauties,
Those glitt'ring dewdrops of a vernal morn,
That spread their colours to the genial beam,
And, sparkling, quiver to the breath of May;

But, when the tempest, with sonorous wing,
Sweeps o'er the grove, forsake the lab'ring bough,
Dispers'd in air, or mingled with the dust.

ASPASIA

Forbear this triumph—still new conflicts wait us,
Foes unforeseen, and dangers unsuspected.
Oft, when the fierce besiegers' eager host
Beholds the fainting garrison retire,
And rushes joyful to the naked wall,
Destruction flashes from th' insidious mine,
And sweeps th' exulting conqueror away.
Perhaps, in vain the sultan's anger spar'd me,
To find a meaner fate from treach'rous friendship—
Abdalla!——

DEMETRIUS

Can Abdalla then dissemble!
That fiery chief, renown'd for gen'rous freedom,
For zeal unguarded, undissembled hate,
For daring truth, and turbulence of honour!

ASPASIA

This open friend, this undesigning hero,
With noisy falsehoods, forc'd me from your arms,
To shock my virtue with a tale of love.

DEMETRIUS

Did not the cause of Greece restrain my sword,
Aspasia should not fear a second insult.

ASPASIA

His pride and love, by turns, inspir'd his tongue,
And intermix'd my praises with his own;

His wealth, his rank, his honours, he recounted,
Till, in the midst of arrogance and fondness,
Th' approaching sultan forc'd me from the palace;
Then, while he gaz'd upon his yielding mistress,
I stole, unheeded, from their ravish'd eyes,
And sought this happy grove in quest of thee.

DEMETRIUS

Soon may the final stroke decide our fate,
Lest baleful discord crush our infant scheme,
And strangled freedom perish in the birth!

ASPASIA

My bosom, harass'd with alternate passions,
Now hopes, now fears—

DEMETRIUS

Th' anxieties of love.

ASPASIA

Think, how the sov'reign arbiter of kingdoms
Detests thy false associates' black designs,
And frowns on perjury, revenge, and murder.
Embark'd with treason on the seas of fate,
When heaven shall bid the swelling billows rage,
And point vindictive lightnings at rebellion,
Will not the patriot share the traitor's danger?
Oh! could thy hand, unaided, free thy country,
Nor mingled guilt pollute the sacred cause!

DEMETRIUS

Permitted oft, though not inspir'd, by heaven,
Successful treasons punish impious kings.

ASPASIA

Nor end my terrours with the sultan's death;
Far as futurity's untravell'd waste
Lies open to conjecture's dubious ken,
On ev'ry side confusion, rage, and death,
Perhaps, the phantoms of a woman's fear,
Beset the treach'rous way with fatal ambush;
Each Turkish bosom burns for thy destruction,
Ambitious Cali dreads the statesman's arts,
And hot Abdalla hates the happy lover.

DEMETRIUS

Capricious man! to good and ill inconstant,
Too much to fear or trust is equal weakness.
Sometimes the wretch, unaw'd by heav'n or hell,
With mad devotion idolizes honour.
The bassa, reeking with his master's murder,
Perhaps, may start at violated friendship.

ASPASIA

How soon, alas! will int'rest, fear, or envy,
O'erthrow such weak, such accidental virtue,
Nor built on faith, nor fortified by conscience!

DEMETRIUS

When desp'rate ills demand a speedy cure,
Distrust is cowardice, and prudence folly.

ASPASIA

Yet, think a moment, ere you court destruction,
What hand, when death has snatch'd away Demetrius,
Shall guard Aspasia from triumphant lust.

DEMETRIUS

Dismiss these needless fears — a troop of Greeks,
Well known, long try'd, expect us on the shore.
Borne on the surface of the smiling deep,
Soon shalt thou scorn, in safety's arms repos'd,
Abdalla's rage and Cali's stratagems.

ASPASIA

Still, still, distrust sits heavy on my heart.
Will e'er a happier hour revisit Greece?

DEMETRIUS

Should heav'n, yet unappeas'd, refuse its aid,
Disperse our hopes, and frustrate our designs,
Yet shall the conscience of the great attempt
Diffuse a brightness on our future days;
Nor will his country's groans reproach Demetrius.
But how canst thou support the woes of exile?
Canst thou forget hereditary splendours,
To live obscure upon a foreign coast,
Content with science, innocence, and love?

ASPASIA

Nor wealth, nor titles, make Aspasia's bliss.
O'erwhelm'd and lost amidst the publick ruins,
Unmov'd, I saw the glitt'ring trifles perish,
And thought the pretty dross beneath a sigh.
Cheerful I follow to the rural cell;
Love be my wealth, and my distinction virtue.

DEMETRIUS

Submissive, and prepar'd for each event,
Now let us wait the last award of heav'n,
Secure of happiness from flight or conquest;

Nor fear the fair and learn'd can want protection.
The mighty Tuscan courts the banish'd arts
To kind Italia's hospitable shades;
There shall soft leisure wing th' excursive soul,
And peace, propitious, smile on fond desire;
There shall despotick eloquence resume
Her ancient empire o'er the yielding heart;
There poetry shall tune her sacred voice,
And wake from ignorance the western world.

SCENE II

Demetrius, Aspasia, Cali

CALI

At length th' unwilling sun resigns the world
To silence and to rest. The hours of darkness,
Propitious hours to stratagem and death,
Pursue the last remains of ling'ring light.

DEMETRIUS

Count not these hours, as parts of vulgar time;
Think them a sacred treasure lent by heaven,
Which, squander'd by neglect, or fear, or folly,
No prayer recalls, no diligence redeems.
To-morrow's dawn shall see the Turkish king
Stretch'd in the dust, or tow'ring on his throne;
To-morrow's dawn shall see the mighty Cali
The sport of tyranny, or lord of nations.

CALI

Then waste no longer these important moments
In soft endearments, and in gentle murmurs;
Nor lose, in love, the patriot and the hero.

DEMETRIUS

'Tis love, combin'd with guilt alone, that melts
The soften'd soul to cowardice and sloth;
But virtuous passion prompts the great resolve,
And fans the slumb'ring spark of heav'nly fire.
Retire, my fair; that pow'r that smiles on goodness,
Guide all thy steps, calm ev'ry stormy thought,
And still thy bosom with the voice of peace!

ASPASIA

Soon may we meet again, secure and free,
To feel no more the pangs of separation! [*Exit.*

Demetrius, Cali

DEMETRIUS

This night alone is ours — Our mighty foe,
No longer lost in am'rous solitude,
Will now remount the slighted seat of empire,
And show Irene to the shouting people:
Aspasia left her, sighing in his arms,
And list'ning to the pleasing tale of pow'r;
With soften'd voice she dropp'd the faint refusal,
Smiling consent she sat, and blushing love.

CALI

Now, tyrant, with satiety of beauty
Now feast thine eyes; thine eyes, that ne'er hereafter
Shall dart their am'rous glances at the fair,
Or glare on Cali with malignant beams.

SCENE III

Demetrius, Cali, Leontius, Abdalla

LEONTIUS

Our bark, unseen, has reach'd th' appointed bay,
And, where yon trees wave o'er the foaming surge,
Reclines against the shore: our Grecian troop
Extends its lines along the sandy beach,
Elate with hope, and panting for a foe.

ABDALLA

The fav'ring winds assist the great design,
Sport in our sails, and murmur o'er the deep.

CALI

'Tis well — A single blow completes our wishes;
Return with speed, Leontius, to your charge;
The Greeks, disorder'd by their leader's absence,
May droop dismay'd, or kindle into madness.

LEONTIUS

Suspected still!—What villain's pois'nous tongue
Dares join Leontius' name with fear or falsehood!
Have I for this preserv'd my guiltless bosom,
Pure as the thoughts of infant innocence?
Have I for this defy'd the chiefs of Turkey,
Intrepid in the flaming front of war?

CALI

Hast thou not search'd my soul's profoundest thoughts?
Is not the fate of Greece and Cali thine?

LEONTIUS

Why has thy choice then pointed out Leontius,
Unfit to share this night's illustrious toils?
To wait, remote from action, and from honour,
An idle list'ner to the distant cries
Of slaughter'd infidels, and clash of swords?
Tell me the cause, that while thy name, Demetrius,
Shall soar, triumphant on the wings of glory,
Despis'd and curs'd, Leontius must descend
Through hissing ages, a proverbial coward,
The tale of women, and the scorn of fools?

DEMETRIUS

Can brave Leontius be the slave of glory?
Glory, the casual gift of thoughtless crowds!
Glory, the bribe of avaricious virtue!
Be but my country free, be thine the praise;
I ask no witness, but attesting conscience,
No records, but the records of the sky.

LEONTIUS

Wilt thou then head the troop upon the shore,
While I destroy th' oppressor of mankind?

DEMETRIUS

What canst thou boast superior to Demetrius?
Ask, to whose sword the Greeks will trust their cause,
My name shall echo through the shouting field:
Demand, whose force yon Turkish heroes dread,
The shudd'ring camp shall murmur out Demetrius.

CALI

Must Greece, still wretched by her children's folly,
For ever mourn their avarice or factions?
Demetrius justly pleads a double title;
The lover's int'rest aids the patriot's claim.

LEONTIUS

My pride shall ne'er protract my country's woes;
Succeed, my friend, unenvied by Leontius.

DEMETRIUS

I feel new spirit shoot along my nerves;
My soul expands to meet approaching freedom.
Now hover o'er us, with propitious wings,
Ye sacred shades of patriots and of martyrs!
All ye, whose blood tyrannick rage effus'd,
Or persecution drank, attend our call;
And from the mansions of perpetual peace
Descend, to sweeten labours, once your own!

CALI

Go then, and with united eloquence [beam
Confirm your troops; and, when the moon's fair
Plays on the quiv'ring waves, to guide our flight,
Return, Demetrius, and be free for ever.

[*Exeunt* Dem. *and* Leon.

SCENE IV

CALI, ABDALLA

ABDALLA

How the new monarch, swell'd with airy rule,
Looks down, contemptuous, from his fancy'd height,
And utters fate, unmindful of Abdalla!

CALI

Far be such black ingratitude from Cali!
When Asia's nations own me for their lord,
Wealth, and command, and grandeur shall be thine!

ABDALLA

Is this the recompense reserv'd for me?
Dar'st thou thus dally with Abdalla's passion?
Henceforward, hope no more my slighted friendship;
Wake from thy dream of power to death and tortures,
And bid thy visionary throne farewell.

CALI

Name, and enjoy thy wish —

ABDALLA

I need not name it;
Aspasia's lovers know but one desire,
Nor hope, nor wish, nor live, but for Aspasia.

CALI

That fatal beauty, plighted to Demetrius,
Heaven makes not mine to give.

ABDALLA

Nor to deny.

CALI

Obtain her, and possess; thou know'st thy rival.

ABDALLA

Too well I know him, since, on Thracia's plains,
I felt the force of his tempestuous arm,
And saw my scatter'd squadrons fly before him.

Nor will I trust th' uncertain chance of combat;
The rights of princes let the sword decide,
The petty claims of empire and of honour:
Revenge and subtle jealousy shall teach
A surer passage to his hated heart.

CALI

Oh! spare the gallant Greek, in him we lose
The politician's arts, and hero's flame.

ABDALLA

When next we meet, before we storm the palace,
The bowl shall circle to confirm our league;
Then shall these juices taint Demetrius' draught,
[*Showing a phial.*
And stream, destructive, through his freezing veins:
Thus shall he live to strike th' important blow,
And perish, ere he taste the joys of conquest.

SCENE V

Mahomet, Mustapha, Cali, Abdalla

MAHOMET

Henceforth, for ever happy be this day,
Sacred to love, to pleasure, and Irene!
The matchless fair has bless'd me with compliance;
Let every tongue resound Irene's praise,
And spread the gen'ral transport through mankind.

CALI

Blest prince, for whom indulgent heav'n ordains,
At once, the joys of paradise and empire,
Now join thy people's and thy Cali's prayers;

Suspend thy passage to the seats of bliss,
Nor wish for houries in Irene's arms.

MAHOMET

Forbear — I know the long-try'd faith of Cali.

CALI

Oh! could the eyes of kings, like those of heav'n,
Search to the dark recesses of the soul,
Oft would they find ingratitude and treason,
By smiles, and oaths, and praises, ill disguis'd.
How rarely would they meet, in crowded courts,
Fidelity so firm, so pure, as mine.

MUSTAPHA

Yet, ere we give our loosen'd thoughts to rapture,
Let prudence obviate an impending danger:
Tainted by sloth, the parent of sedition,
The hungry janizary burns for plunder,
And growls, in private, o'er his idle sabre.

MAHOMET

To still their murmurs, ere the twentieth sun
Shall shed his beams upon the bridal bed,
I rouse to war, and conquer for Irene.
Then shall the Rhodian mourn his sinking tow'rs,
And Buda fall, and proud Vienna tremble;
Then shall Venetia feel the Turkish pow'r,
And subject seas roar round their queen in vain.

ABDALLA

Then seize fair Italy's delightful coast,
To fix your standard in imperial Rome.

MAHOMET

Her sons malicious clemency shall spare,
To form new legends, sanctify new crimes;
To canonize the slaves of superstition,
And fill the world with follies and impostures,
Till angry heav'n shall mark them out for ruin,
And war o'erwhelm them in their dream of vice.
O! could her fabled saints and boasted prayers
Call forth her ancient heroes to the field,
How should I joy, midst the fierce shock of nations,
To cross the tow'rings of an equal soul,
And bid the master-genius rule the world!
Abdalla, Cali, go—proclaim my purpose.

[*Exeunt* Cali *and* Abdalla.

SCENE VI

Mahomet, Mustapha

MAHOMET

Still Cali lives: and must he live to-morrow?
That fawning villain's forc'd congratulations
Will cloud my triumphs, and pollute the day.

MUSTAPHA

With cautious vigilance, at my command,
Two faithful captains, Hasan and Caraza,
Pursue him through his labyrinths of treason,
And wait your summons to report his conduct.

MAHOMET

Call them — but let them not prolong their tale,
Nor press, too much, upon a lover's patience.

[*Exit* Mustapha.

SCENE VII

MAHOMET, *solus*

Whome'er the hope, still blasted, still renew'd,
Of happiness lures on from toil to toil,
Remember Mahomet, and cease thy labour.
Behold him here, in love, in war, successful;
Behold him, wretched in his double triumph!
His fav'rite faithless, and his mistress base,
Ambition only gave her to my arms,
By reason not convinc'd, nor won by love.
Ambition was her crime; but meaner folly
Dooms me to loathe, at once, and dote on falsehood,
And idolize th' apostate I contemn.
If thou art more than the gay dream of fancy,
More than a pleasing sound, without a meaning,
O happiness! sure thou art all Aspasia's.

SCENE VIII

Mahomet, Mustapha, Hasan, Caraza

MAHOMET

Caraza, speak — have ye remark'd the bassa?

CARAZA

Close, as we might unseen, we watch'd his steps:
His hair disorder'd, and his gait unequal,
Betray'd the wild emotions of his mind.
Sudden he stops, and inward turns his eyes,
Absorb'd in thought; then, starting from his trance,
Constrains a sullen smile, and shoots away.
With him Abdalla we beheld—

MUSTAPHA

Abdalla!

MAHOMET

He wears, of late, resentment on his brow,
Deny'd the government of Servia's province.

CARAZA

We mark'd him storming in excess of fury,
And heard, within the thicket that conceal'd us,
An undistinguish'd sound of threat'ning rage.

MUSTAPHA

How guilt, once harbour'd in the conscious breast,
Intimidates the brave, degrades the great;
See Cali, dread of kings, and pride of armies,
By treason levell'd with the dregs of men!
Ere guilty fear depress'd the hoary chief,
An angry murmur, a rebellious frown,
Had stretch'd the fiery boaster in the grave.

MAHOMET

Shall monarchs fear to draw the sword of justice,
Aw'd by the crowd, and by their slaves restrain'd?
Seize him this night, and, through the private passage,
Convey him to the prison's inmost depths,
Reserv'd to all the pangs of tedious death.

[*Exeunt* Mahomet *and* Mustapha.

SCENE IX

HASAN, CARAZA

HASAN

Shall then the Greeks, unpunish'd and conceal'd,
Contrive, perhaps, the ruin of our empire;
League with our chiefs, and propagate sedition?

CARAZA

Whate'er their scheme, the bassa's death defeats it,
And gratitude's strong ties restrain my tongue.

HASAN

What ties to slaves? what gratitude to foes?

CARAZA

In that black day, when slaughter'd thousands fell
Around these fatal walls, the tide of war
Bore me victorious onward, where Demetrius
Tore, unresisted, from the giant hand
Of stern Sebalias, the triumphant crescent,
And dash'd the might of Asam from the ramparts.
There I became, nor blush to make it known,
The captive of his sword. The coward Greeks,
Enrag'd by wrongs, exulting with success,
Doom'd me to die with all the Turkish captains;
But brave Demetrius scorn'd the mean revenge,
And gave me life.—

HASAN

Do thou repay the gift,
Lest unrewarded mercy lose its charms.
Profuse of wealth, or bounteous of success,
When heav'n bestows the privilege to bless,

Let no weak doubt the gen'rous hand restrain;
For when was pow'r beneficent in vain? [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.—SCENE I

ASPASIA, *sola*

IN these dark moments of suspended fate,
While yet the future fortune of my country
Lies in the womb of providence conceal'd,
And anxious angels wait the mighty birth;
O! grant thy sacred influence, pow'rful virtue!
Attentive rise, survey the fair creation,
Till, conscious of th' encircling deity,
Beyond the mists of care thy pinion tow'rs.
This calm, these joys, dear innocence! are thine:
Joys ill exchang'd for gold, and pride, and empire.
[*Enter* Irene *and attendants.*

SCENE II

ASPASIA, IRENE *and attendants*

IRENE

See how the moon, through all th' unclouded sky,
Spreads her mild radiance, and descending dews
Revive the languid flow'rs; thus nature shone
New from the maker's hand, and fair array'd
In the bright colours of primeval spring;
When purity, while fraud was yet unknown,
Play'd fearless in th' inviolated shades.
This elemental joy, this gen'ral calm,
Is, sure, the smile of unoffended heav'n.
Yet! why—

MAID

Behold, within th' embow'ring grove
Aspasia stands—

IRENE

With melancholy mien,
Pensive, and envious of Irene's greatness.
Steal, unperceiv'd, upon her meditations—
But see, the lofty maid, at our approach,
Resumes th' imperious air of haughty virtue.
Are these th' unceasing joys, th' unmingled pleasures, [*To* Aspasia.
For which Aspasia scorn'd the Turkish crown?
Is this th' unshaken confidence in heav'n?
Is this the boasted bliss of conscious virtue?
When did content sigh out her cares in secret?
When did felicity repine in deserts?

ASPASIA

Ill suits with guilt the gaieties of triumph;
When daring vice insults eternal justice,
The ministers of wrath forget compassion,
And snatch the flaming bolt with hasty hand.

IRENE

Forbear thy threats, proud prophetess of ill,
Vers'd in the secret counsels of the sky.

ASPASIA

Forbear!—But thou art sunk beneath reproach;
In vain affected raptures flush the cheek,
And songs of pleasure warble from the tongue,
When fear and anguish labour in the breast,
And all within is darkness and confusion.

Thus, on deceitful Etna's flow'ry side,
Unfading verdure glads the roving eye;
While secret flames, with unextinguish'd rage,
Insatiate on her wasted entrails prey,
And melt her treach'rous beauties into ruin.

[*Enter* Demetrius.

SCENE III

ASPASIA, IRENE, DEMETRIUS

DEMETRIUS

Fly, fly, my love! destruction rushes on us,
The rack expects us, and the sword pursues.

ASPASIA

Is Greece deliver'd? is the tyrant fall'n?

DEMETRIUS

Greece is no more; the prosp'rous tyrant lives,
Reserv'd for other lands, the scourge of heav'n.

ASPASIA

Say, by what fraud, what force, were you defeated?
Betray'd by falsehood, or by crowds o'erborne?

DEMETRIUS

The pressing exigence forbids relation.
Abdalla——

ASPASIA

Hated name! his jealous rage
Broke out in perfidy—Oh! curs'd Aspasia,
Born to complete the ruin of her country!
Hide me, oh hide me from upbraiding Greece;
Oh, hide me from myself!

DEMETRIUS

Be fruitless grief
The doom of guilt alone, nor dare to seize
The breast, where virtue guards the throne of peace,
Devolve, dear maid, thy sorrows on the wretch,
Whose fear, or rage, or treachery, betray'd us!

IRENE, *aside*

A private station may discover more;
Then let me rid them of Irene's presence;
Proceed, and give a loose to love and treason.
[*Withdraws.*

ASPASIA

Yet tell.

DEMETRIUS

To tell or hear were waste of life.

ASPASIA

The life, which only this design supported,
Were now well lost in hearing how you fail'd.

DEMETRIUS

Or meanly fraudulent or madly gay,
Abdalla, while we waited near the palace,
With ill tim'd mirth propos'd the bowl of love.
Just as it reach'd my lips, a sudden cry
Urg'd me to dash it to the ground, untouch'd,
And seize my sword with disencumber'd hand.

ASPASIA

What cry? The stratagem? Did then Abdalla—

DEMETRIUS

At once a thousand passions fir'd his cheek!
Then all is past, he cry'd— and darted from us;
Nor, at the call of Cali, deign'd to turn.

ASPASIA

Why did you stay, deserted and betray'd?
What more could force attempt, or art contrive?

DEMETRIUS

Amazement seiz'd us, and the hoary bassa
Stood, torpid in suspense; but soon Abdalla
Return'd with force that made resistance vain,
And bade his new confed'rates seize the traitors.
Cali, disarm'd, was borne away to death;
Myself escap'd, or favour'd, or neglected.

ASPASIA

Oh Greece! renown'd for science and for wealth,
Behold thy boasted honours snatch'd away.

DEMETRIUS

Though disappointment blast our general scheme,
Yet much remains to hope. I shall not call
The day disastrous, that secures our flight;
Nor think that effort lost, which rescues thee.

[*Enter* Abdalla.

SCENE IV

IRENE, ASPASIA, DEMETRIUS, ABDALLA

ABDALLA

At length, the prize is mine—The haughty maid,
That bears the fate of empires in her air,
Henceforth shall live for me; for me alone
Shall plume her charms, and, with attentive watch,
Steal from Abdalla's eye the sign to smile.

DEMETRIUS

Cease this wild roar of savage exultation;
Advance, and perish in the frantick boast.

ASPASIA

Forbear, Demetrius, 'tis Aspasia calls thee;
Thy love, Aspasia, calls; restrain thy sword;
Nor rush on useless wounds, with idle courage.

DEMETRIUS

What now remains?

ASPASIA

It now remains to fly.

DEMETRIUS

Shall, then, the savage live, to boast his insult;
Tell, how Demetrius shunn'd his single hand,
And stole his life and mistress from his sabre!

ABDALLA

Infatuate loiterer, has fate, in vain,
Unclasp'd his iron gripe to set thee free?
Still dost thou flutter in the jaws of death;
Snar'd with thy fears, and maz'd in stupefaction?

DEMETRIUS

Forgive, my fair; 'tis life, 'tis nature calls:
Now, traitor, feel the fear that chills my hand.

ASPASIA

'Tis madness to provoke superfluous danger,
And cowardice to dread the boast of folly.

ABDALLA

Fly, wretch, while yet my pity grants thee flight;
The pow'r of Turkey waits upon my call.
Leave but this maid, resign a hopeless claim,
And drag away thy life, in scorn and safety,
Thy life, too mean a prey to lure Abdalla.

DEMETRIUS

Once more I dare thy sword; behold the prize,
Behold, I quit her to the chance of battle.
[*Quitting* Aspasia.

ABDALLA

Well may'st thou call thy master to the combat,
And try the hazard, that hast nought to stake;
Alike my death or thine is gain to thee;
But soon thou shalt repent: another moment
Shall throw th' attending janizaries round thee.
[*Exit, hastily,* Abdalla.

SCENE V

ASPASIA, IRENE, DEMETRIUS

IRENE

Abdalla fails; now, fortune, all is mine. [*Aside.*
Haste, Murza, to the palace, let the sultan
[*To one of her attendants.*
Despatch his guards to stop the flying traitors,
While I protract their stay. Be swift and faithful.
[*Exit* Murza.
This lucky stratagem shall charm the sultan, [*Aside.*
Secure his confidence, and fix his love.

DEMETRIUS

Behold a boaster's worth! Now snatch, my fair,
The happy moment; hasten to the shore,
Ere he return with thousands at his side.

ASPASIA

In vain I listen to th' inviting call
Of freedom and of love; my trembling joints,

Relax'd with fear, refuse to bear me forward.
Depart, Demetrius, lest my fate involve thee;
Forsake a wretch abandon'd to despair,
To share the miseries herself has caus'd.

DEMETRIUS

Let us not struggle with th' eternal will,
Nor languish o'er irreparable ruins;
Come, haste and live—Thy innocence and truth
Shall bless our wand'rings, and propitiate heav'n.

IRENE

Press not her flight, while yet her feeble nerves
Refuse their office, and uncertain life
Still labours with imaginary woe;
Here let me tend her with officious care,
Watch each unquiet flutter of the breast,
And joy to feel the vital warmth return,
To see the cloud forsake her kindling cheek,
And hail the rosy dawn of rising health.

ASPASIA

Oh! rather, scornful of flagitious greatness,
Resolve to share our dangers and our toils,
Companion of our flight, illustrious exile,
Leave slav'ry, guilt, and infamy behind.

IRENE

My soul attends thy voice, and banish'd virtue
Strives to regain her empire of the mind:
Assist her efforts with thy strong persuasion;
Sure, 'tis the happy hour ordain'd above,
When vanquish'd vice shall tyrannise no more.

DEMETRIUS

Remember, peace and anguish are before thee,
And honour and reproach, and heav'n and hell.

ASPASIA

Content with freedom, and precarious greatness.

DEMETRIUS

Now make thy choice, while yet the pow'r of choice
Kind heav'n affords thee, and inviting mercy
Holds out her hand to lead thee back to truth.

IRENE

Stay—in this dubious twilight of conviction,
The gleams of reason, and the clouds of passion,
Irradiate and obscure my breast, by turns:
Stay but a moment, and prevailing truth
Will spread resistless light upon my soul.

DEMETRIUS

But, since none knows the danger of a moment,
And heav'n forbids to lavish life away,
Let kind compulsion terminate the contest.
[*Seizing her hand.*
Ye christian captives, follow me to freedom:
A galley waits us, and the winds invite.

IRENE

Whence is this violence?

DEMETRIUS

Your calmer thought
Will teach a gentler term.

IRENE

Forbear this rudeness,
And learn the rev'rence due to Turkey's queen:
Fly, slaves, and call the sultan to my rescue.

DEMETRIUS

Farewell, unhappy maid; may every joy
Be thine, that wealth can give, or guilt receive!

ASPASIA

And when, contemptuous of imperial pow'r,
Disease shall chase the phantoms of ambition,
May penitence attend thy mournful bed,
And wing thy latest pray'r to pitying heav'n!

[*Exeunt* Dem. Asp. *with part of the attendants.*

SCENE VI

[IRENE *walks at a distance from her attendants*]

After a pause

Against the head, which innocence secures,
Insidious malice aims her darts in vain,
Turn'd backwards by the pow'rful breath of heav'n.
Perhaps, e'en now the lovers, unpursu'd,
Bound o'er the sparkling waves. Go, happy bark,
Thy sacred freight shall still the raging main.
To guide thy passage shall th' aërial spirits
Fill all the starry lamps with double blaze;
Th' applauding sky shall pour forth all its beams,
To grace the triumph of victorious virtue;
While I, not yet familiar to my crimes,
Recoil from thought, and shudder at myself.

How am I chang'd! How lately did Irene
Fly from the busy pleasures of her sex,
Well pleas'd to search the treasures of remembrance,
And live her guiltless moments o'er anew!
Come, let us seek new pleasures in the palace,
[*To her attendants, going off.*
Till soft fatigue invite us to repose.

SCENE VII

[*Enter* MUSTAPHA, *meeting and stopping her*]

MUSTAPHA

Fair falsehood, stay.

IRENE

What dream of sudden power
Has taught my slave the language of command?
Henceforth, be wise, nor hope a second pardon.

MUSTAPHA

Who calls for pardon from a wretch condemn'd?

IRENE

Thy look, thy speech, thy action, all is wildness—
Who charges guilt on me?

MUSTAPHA

Who charges guilt!
Ask of thy heart; attend the voice of conscience—
Who charges guilt! lay by this proud resentment
That fires thy cheek, and elevates thy mien,
Nor thus usurp the dignity of virtue.
Review this day.

IRENE

Whate'er thy accusation,
The sultan is my judge.

MUSTAPHA

That hope is past;
Hard was the strife of justice and of love;
But now 'tis o'er, and justice has prevail'd.
Know'st thou not Cali? know'st thou not Demetrius?

IRENE

Bold slave, I know them both—I know them traitors.

MUSTAPHA

Perfidious!—yes—too well thou know'st them traitors.

IRENE

Their treason throws no stain upon Irene.
This day has prov'd my fondness for the sultan;
He knew Irene's truth.

MUSTAPHA

The sultan knows it;
He knows, how near apostasy to treason—
But 'tis not mine to judge—I scorn and leave thee.
I go, lest vengeance urge my hand to blood,
To blood too mean to stain a soldier's sabre.
[*Exit* Mustapha.

IRENE, *to her attendants*

Go, blust'ring slave—He has not heard of Murza.
That dext'rous message frees me from suspicion.

Painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds P.R.A.

GEORGIANA, DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE

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SCENE VIII

Enter HASAN, CARAZA, *with mutes, who throw the black robe upon* IRENE, *and sign to her attendants to withdraw*

HASAN

Forgive, fair excellence, th' unwilling tongue,
The tongue, that, forc'd by strong necessity,
Bids beauty, such as thine, prepare to die.

IRENE

What wild mistake is this! Take hence, with speed,
Your robe of mourning, and your dogs of death.
Quick from my sight, you inauspicious monsters;
Nor dare, henceforth, to shock Irene's walks.

HASAN

Alas! they come commanded by the sultan,
Th' unpitying ministers of Turkish justice,
Nor dare to spare the life his frown condemns.

IRENE

Are these the rapid thunderbolts of war,
That pour with sudden violence on kingdoms,
And spread their flames, resistless, o'er the world?
What sleepy charms benumb these active heroes,
Depress their spirits, and retard their speed?
Beyond the fear of ling'ring punishment,
Aspasia now, within her lover's arms,
Securely sleeps, and, in delightful dreams,
Smiles at the threat'nings of defeated rage.

CARAZA

We come, bright virgin, though relenting nature
Shrinks at the hated task, for thy destruction.
When summon'd by the sultan's clam'rous fury,
We ask'd, with tim'rous tongue, th' offender's name,
He struck his tortur'd breast, and roar'd, Irene!
We started at the sound, again inquir'd;
Again his thund'ring voice return'd, Irene!

IRENE

Whence is this rage; what barb'rous tongue has
wrong'd me?
What fraud misleads him? or what crimes incense?

HASAN

Expiring Cali nam'd Irene's chamber,
The place appointed for his master's death.

IRENE

Irene's chamber! From my faithful bosom
Far be the thought—But hear my protestation.

CARAZA

'Tis ours, alas! to punish, not to judge,
Not call'd to try the cause, we heard the sentence,
Ordain'd the mournful messengers of death.

IRENE

Some ill designing statesman's base intrigue!
Some cruel stratagem of jealous beauty!
Perhaps, yourselves the villains that defame me:—
Now haste to murder, ere returning thought
Recall th' extorted doom.—It must be so:
Confess your crime, or lead me to the sultan;

There dauntless truth shall blast the vile accuser;
Then shall you feel, what language cannot utter,
Each piercing torture, ev'ry change of pain,
That vengeance can invent, or pow'r inflict.
[*Enter* Abdalla: *he stops short and listens.*

SCENE IX

IRENE, HASAN, CARAZA, ABDALLA

ABDALLA, *aside*

All is not lost, Abdalla; see the queen,
See the last witness of thy guilt and fear,
Enrob'd in death—Despatch her, and be great.

CARAZA

Unhappy fair! compassion calls upon me
To check this torrent of imperious rage:
While unavailing anger crowds thy tongue
With idle threats and fruitless exclamation,
The fraudful moments ply their silent wings,
And steal thy life away. Death's horrid angel
Already shakes his bloody sabre o'er thee.
The raging sultan burns, till our return,
Curses the dull delays of ling'ring mercy,
And thinks his fatal mandates ill obey'd.

ABDALLA

Is then your sov'reign's life so cheaply rated,
That thus you parley with detected treason?
Should she prevail to gain the sultan's presence,
Soon might her tears engage a lover's credit;
Perhaps, her malice might transfer the charge;
Perhaps, her pois'nous tongue might blast Abdalla.

IRENE

O! let me but be heard, nor fear from me
Or flights of pow'r, or projects of ambition.
My hopes, my wishes, terminate in life,
A little life, for grief, and for repentance.

ABDALLA

I mark'd her wily messenger afar,
And saw him sculking in the closest walks:
I guess'd her dark designs, and warn'd the sultan,
And bring her former sentence new-confirmed.

HASAN

Then call it not our cruelty, nor crime;
Deem us not deaf to woe, nor blind to beauty,
That, thus constrain'd, we speed the stroke of death. [*Beckons the mutes.*

IRENE

O, name not death! Distraction and amazement,
Horrour and agony are in that sound!
Let me but live, heap woes on woes upon me;
Hide me with murd'rers in the dungeon's gloom;
Send me to wander on some pathless shore,
Let shame and hooting infamy pursue me,
Let slav'ry harass, and let hunger gripe.

CARAZA

Could we reverse the sentence of the sultan,
Our bleeding bosoms plead Irene's cause.
But cries and tears are vain; prepare, with patience,
To meet that fate, we can delay no longer.
[*The mutes, at the sign, lay hold of her.*

ABDALLA

Despatch, ye ling'ring slaves; or nimbler hands,
Quick at my call, shall execute your charge;
Despatch, and learn a fitter time for pity.

IRENE

Grant me one hour. O! grant me but a moment,
And bounteous heav'n repay the mighty mercy,
With peaceful death, and happiness eternal.

CARAZA

The pray'r I cannot grant—I dare not hear.
Short be thy pains. [*Signs again to the mutes.*

IRENE

Unutterable anguish!
Guilt and despair, pale spectres! grin around me,
And stun me with the yellings of damnation!
O, hear my pray'rs! accept, all-pitying heav'n,
These tears, these pangs, these last remains of life;
Nor let the crimes of this detested day
Be charg'd upon my soul. O, mercy! mercy!
[*Mutes force her out.*

SCENE X

ABDALLA, HASAN, CARAZA

ABDALLA, *aside*

Safe in her death, and in Demetrius' flight,
Abdalla, bid thy troubled breast be calm.
Now shalt thou shine, the darling of the sultan,
The plot all Cali's, the detection thine.

HASAN *to* CARAZA

Does not thy bosom (for I know thee tender,
A stranger to th' oppressor's savage joy,)
Melt at Irene's fate, and share her woes?

CARAZA

Her piercing cries yet fill the loaded air,
Dwell on my ear, and sadden all my soul.
But let us try to clear our clouded brows,
And tell the horrid tale with cheerful face;
The stormy sultan rages at our stay.

ABDALLA

Frame your report with circumspective art:
Inflame her crimes, exalt your own obedience;
But let no thoughtless hint involve Abdalla.

CARAZA

What need of caution to report the fate
Of her, the sultan's voice condemn'd to die?
Or why should he, whose violence of duty
Has serv'd his prince so well, demand our silence?

ABDALLA

Perhaps, my zeal, too fierce, betray'd my prudence;
Perhaps, my warmth exceeded my commission;
Perhaps—I will not stoop to plead my cause,
Or argue with the slave that sav'd Demetrius.

CARAZA

From his escape learn thou the pow'r of virtue;
Nor hope his fortune, while thou want'st his worth.

HASAN

The sultan comes, still gloomy, still enraged.

SCENE XI

Hasan, Caraza, Mahomet, Mustapha, Abdalla

MAHOMET

Where's this fair traitress? Where's this smiling mischief,
Whom neither vows could fix, nor favours bind?

HASAN

Thine orders, mighty sultan, are perform'd,
And all Irene now is breathless clay.

MAHOMET

Your hasty zeal defrauds the claim of justice,
And disappointed vengeance burns in vain.
I came to heighten tortures by reproach,
And add new terrours to the face of death. [pire?
Was this the maid, whose love I bought with em-
True, she was fair; the smile of innocence
Play'd on her cheek—So shone the first apostate—
Irene's chamber! Did not roaring Cali,
Just as the rack forc'd out his struggling soul,
Name for the scene of death, Irene's chamber?

MUSTAPHA

His breath prolong'd, but to detect her treason,
Then, in short sighs, forsook his broken frame.

MAHOMET

Decreed to perish in Irene's chamber!
There had she lull'd me with endearing falsehoods,
Clasp'd in her arms, or slumb'ring on her breast,
And bar'd my bosom to the ruffian's dagger.

SCENE XII

HASAN, CARAZA, MAHOMET, MUSTAPHA, MURZA, ABDALLA

MURZA

Forgive, great sultan, that, by fate prevented,
I bring a tardy message from Irene.

MAHOMET

Some artful wile of counterfeited love!
Some soft decoy to lure me to destruction!
And thou, the curs'd accomplice of her treason,
Declare thy message, and expect thy doom.

MURZA

The queen requested, that a chosen troop
Might intercept the traitor Greek, Demetrius,
Then ling'ring with his captive mistress here.

MUSTAPHA

The Greek, Demetrius! whom th' expiring bassa
Declar'd the chief associate of his guilt!

MAHOMET

A chosen troop—to intercept—Demetrius—
The queen requested—Wretch, repeat the message;
And, if one varied accent prove thy falsehood,
Or but one moment's pause betray confusion,
Those trembling limbs—Speak out, thou shiv'ring traitor.

MURZA

The queen requested——

MAHOMET

Who? the dead Irene?
Was she then guiltless! Has my thoughtless rage
Destroy'd the fairest workmanship of heav'n!
Doom'd her to death, unpity'd and unheard,
Amidst her kind solicitudes for me!
Ye slaves of cruelty, ye tools of rage,
[*To* Hasan *and* Caraza.
Ye blind, officious ministers of folly,
Could not her charms repress your zeal for murder?
Could not her pray'rs, her innocence, her tears,
Suspend the dreadful sentence for an hour?
One hour had freed me from the fatal errour!
One hour had sav'd me from despair and madness.

CARAZA

Your fierce impatience forc'd us from your presence,
Urg'd us to speed, and bade us banish pity,
Nor trust our passions with her fatal charms.

MAHOMET

What hadst thou lost, by slighting those commands?
Thy life, perhaps—Were but Irene spar'd,
Well, if a thousand lives like thine had perish'd;
Such beauty, sweetness, love, were cheaply bought
With half the grov'ling slaves that load the globe.

MUSTAPHA

Great is thy woe! But think, illustrious sultan,
Such ills are sent for souls, like thine, to conquer.
Shake off this weight of unavailing grief,
Rush to the war, display thy dreadful banners,
And lead thy troops, victorious, round the world.

MAHOMET

Robb'd of the maid, with whom I wish'd to triumph,
No more I burn for fame, or for dominion;
Success and conquest now are empty sounds,
Remorse and anguish seize on all my breast;
Those groves, whose shades embower'd the dear Irene,
Heard her last cries, and fann'd her dying beauties,
Shall hide me from the tasteless world for ever.
[Mahomet *goes back, and returns.*
Yet, ere I quit the sceptre of dominion,
Let one just act conclude the hateful day—
Hew down, ye guards, those vassals of destruction,
[*Pointing to* Hasan *and* Caraza.
Those hounds of blood, that catch the hint to kill,
Bear off, with eager haste, th' unfinished sentence,
And speed the stroke, lest mercy should o'ertake them.

CARAZA

Then hear, great Mahomet, the voice of truth.

MAHOMET

Hear! shall I hear thee! didst thou hear Irene?

CARAZA

Hear but a moment.

MAHOMET

Hadst thou heard a moment,
Thou might'st have liv'd, for thou hadst spar'd Irene.

CARAZA

I heard her, pitied her, and wish'd to save her.

MAHOMET

And wish'd—be still thy fate to wish in vain.

CARAZA

I heard, and soften'd, till Abdalla brought
Her final doom, and hurried her destruction.

MAHOMET

Abdalla brought her doom! Abdalla brought it!
The wretch, whose guilt, declar'd by tortur'd Cali,
My rage and grief had hid from my remembrance:
Abdalla brought her doom!

HASAN

Abdalla brought it,
While yet she begg'd to plead her cause before thee.

MAHOMET

O, seize me, madness—Did she call on me!
I feel, I see the ruffian's barb'rous rage.
He seiz'd her melting in the fond appeal,
And stopp'd the heav'nly voice that call'd on me.
My spirits fail; awhile support me, vengeance—
Be just, ye slaves; and, to be just, be cruel;
Contrive new racks, imbitter ev'ry pang,
Inflict whatever treason can deserve,
Which murder'd innocence that call'd on me.
[*Exit* Mahomet; Abdalla *is dragged off.*

SCENE XIII

HASAN, CARAZA, MUSTAPHA, MURZA

MUSTAPHA *to* MURZA

What plagues, what tortures, are in store for thee,
Thou sluggish idler, dilatory slave!

Behold the model of consummate beauty,
Torn from the mourning earth by thy neglect.

MURZA

Such was the will of heav'n—A band of Greeks,
That mark'd my course, suspicious of my purpose,
Rush'd out and seiz'd me, thoughtless and unarm'd,
Breathless, amaz'd, and on the guarded beach
Detain'd me, till Demetrius set me free.

MUSTAPHA

So sure the fall of greatness, rais'd on crimes!
So fix'd the justice of all conscious heav'n!
When haughty guilt exults with impious joy,
Mistake shall blast, or accident destroy;
Weak man, with erring rage, may throw the dart,
But heav'n shall guide it to the guilty heart.

EPILOGUE

BY SIR WILLIAM YONGE

Marry a Turk! a haughty, tyrant king!
Who thinks us women born to dress and sing
To please his fancy! see no other man!
Let him persuade me to it—if he can;
Besides, he has fifty wives; and who can bear
To have the fiftieth part, her paltry share?

'Tis true, the fellow's handsome, straight, and tall,
But how the devil should he please us all!
My swain is little—true—but, be it known,
My pride's to have that little all my own.
Men will be ever to their errours blind,
Where woman's not allow'd to speak her mind.
I swear this eastern pageantry is nonsense,
And for one man—one wife's enough in conscience.

In vain proud man usurps what's woman's due;
For us, alone, they honour's paths pursue:
Inspir'd by us, they glory's heights ascend;
Woman the source, the object, and the end.
Though wealth, and pow'r, and glory, they receive,
These are all trifles to what we can give.
For us the statesman labours, hero fights,
Bears toilsome days, and wakes long tedious nights;
And, when blest peace has silenc'd war's alarms,
Receives his full reward in beauty's arms.

Prologue

SPOKEN BY MR. GARRICK, APRIL 5, 1750, BEFORE THE MASQUE OF COMUS

ACTED AT DRURY LANE THEATRE, FOR THE BENEFIT OF MILTON'S GRANDDAUGHTER [P].

YE patriot crowds, who burn for England's fame,
Ye nymphs, whose bosoms beat at Milton's name;
Whose gen'rous zeal, unbought by flatt'ring rhymes,
Shames the mean pensions of Augustan times;
Immortal patrons of succeeding days,
Attend this prelude of perpetual praise;
Let wit, condemn'd the feeble war to wage
With close malevolence, or publick rage;
Let study, worn with virtue's fruitless lore,
Behold this theatre, and grieve no more.
This night, distinguish'd by your smiles, shall tell,
That never Britain can in vain excel;
The slighted arts futurity shall trust,
And rising ages hasten to be just.

At length, our mighty bard's victorious lays
Fill the loud voice of universal praise;
And baffled spite, with hopeless anguish dumb,
Yields to renown the centuries to come;
With ardent haste each candidate of fame,
Ambitious, catches at his tow'ring name;
He sees, and pitying sees, vain wealth bestow
Those pageant honours, which he scorn'd below;

[P] See Life of Milton.

While crowds aloft the laureate bust behold,
Or trace his form on circulating gold.
Unknown, unheeded, long his offspring lay,
And want hung threat'ning o'er her slow decay.
What, though she shine with no Miltonian fire,
No fav'ring muse her morning dreams inspire;
Yet softer claims the melting heart engage,
Her youth laborious, and her blameless age;
Her's the mild merits of domestick life,
The patient sufferer, and the faithful wife.
Thus, grac'd with humble virtue's native charms,
Her grandsire leaves her in Britannia's arms;
Secure with peace, with competence, to dwell,
While tutelary nations guard her cell.
Yours is the charge, ye fair, ye wise, ye brave!
'Tis yours to crown desert—beyond the grave.

Prologue

TO THE COMEDY OF THE GOOD-NATUR'D MAN, 1769

Prest by the load of life, the weary mind
Surveys the gen'ral toil of human kind;
With cool submission joins the lab'ring train,
And social sorrow loses half its pain:
Our anxious bard, without complaint, may share
This bustling season's epidemick care;
Like Cæsar's pilot, dignify'd by fate,
Tost in one common storm with all the great;
Distrest alike the statesman and the wit,
When one a borough courts, and one the pit.
The busy candidates for pow'r and fame
Have hopes, and fears, and wishes, just the same;

Disabled both to combat or to fly,
Must hear all taunts, and hear without reply.
Uncheck'd on both loud rabbles vent their rage,
As mongrels bay the lion in a cage.
Th' offended burgess hoards his angry tale,
For that blest year, when all that vote may rail;
Their schemes of spite the poet's foes dismiss,
Till that glad night, when all that hate may hiss.
"This day the powder'd curls and golden coat,"
Says swelling Crispin, "begg'd a cobbler's vote."
"This night our wit," the pert apprentice cries,
"Lies at my feet; I hiss him, and he dies."
The great, 'tis true, can charm th' electing tribe;
The bard may supplicate, but cannot bribe.
Yet, judg'd by those whose voices ne'er were sold,
He feels no want of ill persuading gold;
But, confident of praise, if praise be due,
Trusts, without fear, to merit and to you.

Prologue

TO THE COMEDY OF A WORD TO THE WISE[q].

Spoken by Mr. Hull

This night presents a play, which publick rage,
Or right, or wrong, once hooted from the stage[r].
From zeal or malice, now, no more we dread,
For English vengeance wars not with the dead.

[q] Performed at Covent garden theatre in 1777, for the benefit of Mrs. Kelly, widow of Hugh Kelly, esq. (the author of the play,) and her children.

[r] Upon the first representation of this play, 1770, a party assembled to damn it, and succeeded.

A gen'rous foe regards, with pitying eye,
The man whom fate has laid, where all must lie.
To wit, reviving from its author's dust,
Be kind, ye judges, or at least be just.
For no renew'd hostilities invade
Th' oblivious grave's inviolable shade.
Let one great payment ev'ry claim appease;
And him, who cannot hurt, allow to please;
To please by scenes, unconscious of offence,
By harmless merriment, or useful sense.
Where aught of bright, or fair, the piece displays,
Approve it only—'tis too late to praise.
If want of skill, or want of care appear,
Forbear to hiss—the poet cannot hear.
By all, like him, must praise and blame be found,
At best a fleeting gleam, or empty sound.
Yet, then, shall calm reflection bless the night,
When lib'ral pity dignify'd delight;
When pleasure fir'd her torch at virtue's flame,
And mirth was bounty with an humbler name.

Spring

an ode

Stern winter now, by spring repress'd,
Forbears the long-continued strife;
And nature, on her naked breast,
Delights to catch the gales of life.
Now o'er the rural kingdom roves
Soft pleasure with the laughing train,
Love warbles in the vocal groves,
And vegetation plants the plain.

Unhappy! whom to beds of pain,
  Arthritick[s] tyranny consigns;
Whom smiling nature courts in vain,
  Though rapture sings, and beauty shines.
Yet though my limbs disease invades,
  Her wings imagination tries,
And bears me to the peaceful shades,
  Where ———'s humble turrets rise;
Here stop, my soul, thy rapid flight,
  Nor from the pleasing groves depart,
Where first great nature charm'd my sight,
  Where wisdom first inform'd my heart.
Here let me through the vales pursue
  A guide—a father—and a friend,
Once more great nature's works renew,
  Once more on wisdom's voice attend.
From false caresses, causeless strife,
  Wild hope, vain fear, alike remov'd,
Here let me learn the use of life,
  When best enjoy'd—when most improv'd.
Teach me, thou venerable bower,
  Cool meditation's quiet seat,
The gen'rous scorn of venal power,
  The silent grandeur of retreat.
When pride, by guilt, to greatness climbs,
  Or raging factions rush to war,
Here let me learn to shun the crimes,
  I can't prevent, and will not share.
But, lest I fall by subtler foes,
  Bright wisdom, teach me Curio's art,

[s] The author being ill of the gout.

The swelling passions to compose,
  And quell the rebels of the heart.

Midsummer

an ode

O Phœbus! down the western sky,
  Far hence diffuse thy burning ray,
Thy light to distant worlds supply,
  And wake them to the cares of day.
Come, gentle eve, the friend of care,
  Come, Cynthia, lovely queen of night!
Refresh me with a cooling air,
  And cheer me with a lambent light:
Lay me, where o'er the verdant ground
  Her living carpet nature spreads;
Where the green bow'r, with roses crown'd,
  In show'rs its fragrant foliage sheds;
Improve the peaceful hour with wine;
  Let musick die along the grove;
Around the bowl let myrtles twine,
  And ev'ry strain be tun'd to love.
Come, Stella, queen of all my heart!
  Come, born to fill its vast desires!
Thy looks perpetual joys impart,
  Thy voice perpetual love inspires.
Whilst, all my wish and thine complete,
  By turns we languish and we burn,
Let sighing gales our sighs repeat,
  Our murmurs—murmuring brooks return.
Let me, when nature calls to rest,
  And blushing skies the morn foretell,

Sink on the down of Stella's breast,
And bid the waking world farewell.

Autumn

AN ODE

Alas! with swift and silent pace,
Impatient time rolls on the year;
The seasons change, and nature's face
Now sweetly smiles, now frowns severe.
'Twas spring, 'twas summer, all was gay,
Now autumn bends a cloudy brow;
The flow'rs of spring are swept away,
And summer-fruits desert the bough.
The verdant leaves, that play'd on high,
And wanton'd on the western breeze,
Now, trod in dust, neglected lie,
As Boreas strips the bending trees.
The fields, that wav'd with golden grain,
As russet heaths, are wild and bare;
Not moist with dew, but drench'd with rain,
Nor health, nor pleasure, wanders there.
No more, while through the midnight shade,
Beneath the moon's pale orb I stray,
Soft pleasing woes my heart invade,
As Progne pours the melting lay.
From this capricious clime she soars,
Oh! would some god but wings supply!
To where each morn the spring restores,
Companion of her flight I'd fly.
Vain wish! me fate compels to bear
The downward season's iron reign;

Compels to breathe polluted air,
And shiver on a blasted plain.
What bliss to life can autumn yield,
If glooms, and show'rs, and storms prevail,
And Ceres flies the naked field,
And flowers, and fruits, and Phœbus fail?
Oh! what remains, what lingers yet,
To cheer me in the dark'ning hour!
The grape remains! the friend of wit,
In love, and mirth, of mighty pow'r.
Haste—press the clusters, fill the bowl;
Apollo! shoot thy parting ray:
This gives the sunshine of the soul,
This god of health, and verse, and day.
Still—still the jocund strain shall flow,
The pulse with vig'rous rapture beat;
My Stella with new charms shall glow,
And ev'ry bliss in wine shall meet.

Winter

AN ODE

No more the morn, with tepid rays,
Unfolds the flow'r of various hue;
Noon spreads no more the genial blaze,
Nor gentle eve distils the dew.
The ling'ring hours prolong the night,
Usurping darkness shares the day;
Her mists restrain the force of light,
And Phœbus holds a doubtful sway.
By gloomy twilight, half reveal'd,
With sighs we view the hoary hill,

The leafless wood, the naked field,
  The snow-topp'd cot, the frozen rill.
No musick warbles through the grove,
  No vivid colours paint the plain;
No more, with devious steps, I rove
  Through verdant paths, now sought in vain.
Aloud the driving tempest roars,
  Congeal'd, impetuous show'rs descend;
Haste, close the window, bar the doors,
  Fate leaves me Stella, and a friend.
In nature's aid, let art supply
  With light and heat my little sphere;
Rouse, rouse the fire, and pile it high,
  Light up a constellation here.
Let musick sound the voice of joy,
  Or mirth repeat the jocund tale;
Let love his wanton wiles employ,
  And o'er the season wine prevail.
Yet time life's dreary winter brings,
  When mirth's gay tale shall please no more
Nor musick charm—though Stella sings;
  Nor love, nor wine, the spring restore.
Catch, then, Oh! catch the transient hour,
  Improve each moment as it flies;
Life's a short summer—man a flow'r:
  He dies—alas! how soon he dies!

The Winter's Walk

Behold, my fair, where'er we rove,
  What dreary prospects round us rise;

The naked hill, the leafless grove,
The hoary ground, the frowning skies!
Nor only through the wasted plain,
Stern winter! is thy force confess'd;
Still wider spreads thy horrid reign,
I feel thy pow'r usurp my breast.
Enliv'ning hope, and fond desire,
Resign the heart to spleen and care;
Scarce frighted love maintains her fire,
And rapture saddens to despair,
In groundless hope, and causeless fear,
Unhappy man! behold thy doom;
Still changing with the changeful year,
The slave of sunshine and of gloom.
Tir'd with vain joys, and false alarms,
With mental and corporeal strife,
Snatch me, my Stella, to thy arms,
And screen me from the ills of life[t].

To Miss *****

ON HER GIVING THE AUTHOR A GOLD AND SILK NETWORK PURSE OF HER OWN WEAVING[u].

Though gold and silk their charms unite
To make thy curious web delight,
In vain the varied work would shine,
If wrought by any hand but thine;
Thy hand, that knows the subtler art
To weave those nets that catch the heart.

[t] And *hide* me from the *sight* of life. 1st edition.
[u] Printed among Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies.

Spread out by me, the roving coin
Thy nets may catch, but not confine;
Nor can I hope thy silken chain
The glitt'ring vagrants shall restrain.
Why, Stella, was it then decreed,
The heart, once caught, should ne'er be freed?

To Miss *****

ON HER PLAYING UPON THE HARPSICHORD, IN A ROOM HUNG WITH FLOWER-PIECES OF HER OWN PAINTING[v].

When Stella strikes the tuneful string,
In scenes of imitated spring,
Where beauty lavishes her pow'rs
On beds of never-fading flow'rs,
And pleasure propagates around
Each charm of modulated sound;
Ah! think not, in the dang'rous hour,
The nymph fictitious as the flow'r;
But shun, rash youth, the gay alcove,
Nor tempt the snares of wily love.
When charms thus press on ev'ry sense,
What thought of flight, or of defence?
Deceitful hope, and vain desire,
For ever flutter o'er her lyre,
Delighting, as the youth draws nigh,
To point the glances of her eye,
And forming, with unerring art,
New chains to hold the captive heart.
But on those regions of delight
Might truth intrude with daring flight,

[v] Printed among Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies.

Could Stella, sprightly, fair, and young,
One moment hear the moral song,
Instruction, with her flowers, might spring,
And wisdom warble from her string.

Mark, when from thousand mingled dies
Thou seest one pleasing form arise,
How active light, and thoughtful shade
In greater scenes each other aid;
Mark, when the different notes agree
In friendly contrariety,
How passion's well-accorded strife
Gives all the harmony of life;
Thy pictures shall thy conduct frame,
Consistent still, though not the same;
Thy musick teach the nobler art,
To tune the regulated heart.

Evening; An Ode

TO STELLA

Ev'ning now from purple wings
Sheds the grateful gifts she brings;
Brilliant drops bedeck the mead,
Cooling breezes shake the reed;
Shake the reed, and curl the stream,
Silver'd o'er with Cynthia's beam;
Near the checquer'd, lonely grove,
Hears, and keeps thy secrets, love.
Stella, thither let us stray,
Lightly o'er the dewy way.
Phœbus drives his burning car
Hence, my lovely Stella, far;

In his stead, the queen of night
Round us pours a lambent light;
Light, that seems but just to show
Breasts that beat, and cheeks that glow.
Let us now, in whisper'd joy,
Ev'ning's silent hours employ;
Silence best, and conscious shades,
Please the hearts that love invades;
Other pleasures give them pain,
Lovers all but love disdain.

TO THE SAME

Whether Stella's eyes are found
Fix'd on earth, or glancing round,
If her face with pleasure glow,
If she sigh at others' woe,
If her easy air express
Conscious worth, or soft distress,
Stella's eyes, and air, and face,
Charm with undiminish'd grace.
If on her we see display'd
Pendent gems, and rich brocade;
If her chints with less expense
Flows in easy negligence;
Still she lights the conscious flame,
Still her charms appear the same;
If she strikes the vocal strings,
If she's silent, speaks, or sings,
If she sit, or if she move,
Still we love, and still approve.
Vain the casual, transient glance,

Which alone can please by chance;
Beauty, which depends on art,
Changing with the changing heart,
Which demands the toilet's aid,
Pendent gems and rich brocade.
I those charms alone can prize,
Which from constant nature rise,
Which nor circumstance, nor dress,
E'er can make, or more, or less.

To a Friend

No more thus brooding o'er yon heap,
With av'rice, painful vigils keep;
Still unenjoy'd the present store,
Still endless sighs are breath'd for more.
Oh! quit the shadow, catch the prize,
Which not all India's treasure buys!
To purchase heav'n has gold the power?
Can gold remove the mortal hour?
In life, can love be bought with gold?
Are friendship's pleasures to be sold?
No—all that's worth a wish—a thought,
Fair virtue gives unbrib'd, unbought.
Cease then on trash thy hopes to bind,
Let nobler views engage thy mind.
With science tread the wondrous way,
Or learn the muses' moral lay;
In social hours indulge thy soul,
Where mirth and temp'rance mix the bowl;
To virtuous love resign thy breast,
And be, by blessing beauty—blest.

Thus taste the feast, by nature spread,
Ere youth, and all its joys are fled;
Come, taste with me the balm of life,
Secure from pomp, and wealth, and strife.
I boast whate'er for man was meant,
In health, and Stella, and content;
And scorn! oh! let that scorn be thine!
Mere things of clay that dig the mine.

Stella in Mourning

When lately Stella's form display'd
The beauties of the gay brocade,
The nymphs, who found their pow'r decline,
Proclaim'd her not so fair as fine.
"Fate! snatch away the bright disguise,
And let the goddess trust her eyes."
Thus blindly pray'd the fretful fair,
And fate malicious heard the pray'r;
But, brighten'd by the sable dress,
As virtue rises in distress,
Since Stella still extends her reign,
Ah! how shall envy sooth her pain?
Th' adoring youth and envious fair,
Henceforth, shall form one common prayer:
And love and hate, alike, implore
The skies—"That Stella mourn no more."

To Stella

Not the soft sighs of vernal gales,
The fragrance of the flow'ry vales,

The murmurs of the crystal rill,
The vocal grove, the verdant hill;
Not all their charms, though all unite,
Can touch my bosom with delight.

Not all the gems on India's shore,
Not all Peru's unbounded store,
Not all the power, nor all the fame,
That heroes, kings, or poets claim;
Nor knowledge, which the learn'd approve;
To form one wish my soul can move.

Yet nature's charms allure my eyes,
And knowledge, wealth, and fame I prize;
Fame, wealth, and knowledge I obtain,
Nor seek I nature's charms in vain;
In lovely Stella all combine;
And, lovely Stella! thou art mine.

Verses

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF A GENTLEMAN, TO WHOM A LADY HAD GIVEN A SPRIG OF MYRTLE[w].

What hopes, what terrours, does thy gift create!
Ambiguous emblem of uncertain fate!
The myrtle (ensign of supreme command,
Consign'd by Venus to Melissa's hand)
Not less capricious than a reigning fair,
Oft favours, oft rejects, a lover's pray'r.

[w] These verses were first printed in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1768, p. 439, but were written many years earlier. Elegant as they are, Dr. Johnson assured me, they were composed in the short space of five minutes.—N.

In myrtle shades oft sings the happy swain,
In myrtle shades despairing ghosts complain.
The myrtle crowns the happy lovers' heads,
Th' unhappy lovers' graves the myrtle spreads.
Oh! then, the meaning of thy gift impart,
And ease the throbbings of an anxious heart.
Soon must this bough, as you shall fix its doom,
Adorn Philander's head, or grace his tomb.

To Lady Firebrace[x],

AT BURY ASSIZES

At length, must Suffolk beauties shine in vain,
So long renown'd in B——n's deathless strain?
Thy charms, at least, fair Firebrace, might inspire
Some zealous bard to wake the sleeping lyre;
For, such thy beauteous mind and lovely face,
Thou seem'st at once, bright nymph, a muse and grace.

To Lyce

AN ELDERLY LADY

Ye nymphs, whom starry rays invest,
By flatt'ring poets given;
Who shine, by lavish lovers drest,
In all the pomp of heaven;

[x] This lady was Bridget, third daughter of Philip Bacon, esq. of Ipswich, and relict of Philip Evers, esq. of that town. She became the second wife of sir Cordell Firebrace, the last baronet of that name, to whom she brought a fortune of £25,000, July 26, 1737. Being again left a widow, in 1759, she was a third time married, April 7, 1762, to William Campbell, esq. uncle to the late duke of Argyle, and died July 3, 1782.

Engross not all the beams on high,
  Which gild a lover's lays;
But, as your sister of the sky,
  Let Lyce share the praise.

Her silver locks display the moon,
  Her brows a cloudy show,
Strip'd rainbows round her eyes are seen,
  And show'rs from either flow.

Her teeth the night with darkness dies,
  She's starr'd with pimples o'er;
Her tongue, like nimble lightning, plies,
  And can with thunder roar.

But some Zelinda, while I sing,
  Denies my Lyce shines;
And all the pens of Cupid's wing
  Attack my gentle lines.

Yet, spite of fair Zelinda's eye,
  And all her bards express,
My Lyce makes as good a sky,
  And I but flatter less.

ON THE DEATH OF

MR. ROBERT LEVET[7],

A PRACTISER IN PHYSICK

CONDEMN'D to hope's delusive mine,
  As on we toil, from day to day,

[7] These stanzas, to adopt the words of Dr. Drake, "are warm from the heart; and this is the only poem, from the pen of Johnson, that has been bathed with tears." Levet was Johnson's constant and attentive com-

By sudden blasts, or slow decline,
  Our social comforts drop away.

Well try'd, through many a varying year,
  See Levet to the grave descend,
Officious, innocent, sincere,
  Of ev'ry friendless name the friend.

Yet still he fills affection's eye,
  Obscurely wise, and coarsely kind;
Nor, letter'd arrogance, deny
  Thy praise to merit unrefined.

When fainting nature call'd for aid,
  And hov'ring death prepar'd the blow,
His vig'rous remedy display'd
  The pow'r of art, without the show.

In mis'ry's darkest cavern known,
  His useful care was ever nigh,
Where hopeless anguish pour'd his groan,
  And lonely want retir'd to die.

No summons, mock'd by chill delay,
  No petty gain, disdain'd by pride;
The modest wants of ev'ry day
  The toil of ev'ry day supply'd.

panion, for near forty years; he was a practitioner in physic, among the lower class of people, in London. Humanity, rather than desire of gain, seems to have actuated this single hearted and amiable being; and never were the virtues of charity recorded in more touching strains. "I am acquainted," says Dr. Drake, "with nothing superior to them in the productions of the moral muse." See Drake's Literary Life of Johnson; and Boswell, i. ii. iii. iv.—Ed.

His virtues walk'd their narrow round,
Nor made a pause, nor left a void;
And sure the eternal master found
The single talent well-employ'd.

The busy day—the peaceful night,
Unfelt, uncounted, glided by;
His frame was firm—his pow'rs were bright,
Though now his eightieth year was nigh.

Then, with no fiery throbbing pain,
No cold gradations of decay,
Death broke, at once, the vital chain,
And freed his soul the nearest way.

Epitaph on Claude Phillips

AN ITINERANT MUSICIAN[z].

Phillips! whose touch harmonious could remove
The pangs of guilty pow'r, and hapless love,
Rest here, distress'd by poverty no more,
Find here that calm thou gav'st so oft before;
Sleep, undisturb'd, within this peaceful shrine,
Till angels wake thee, with a note like thine.

[z] These lines are among Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies: they are, nevertheless, recognised as Johnson's, in a memorandum of his handwriting, and were probably written at her request. This Phillips was a fiddler, who travelled up and down Wales, and was much celebrated for his skill. The above epitaph, according to Mr. Boswell, won the applause of lord Kames, prejudiced against Johnson as he was. It was published in Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies, and was, at first, ascribed to Garrick, from its appearing with the signature G.— Garrick, however, related, that they were composed, almost impromptu, by Johnson, on hearing some lines on the subject, by Dr. Wilkes, which he disapproved. See Boswell, i. 126, where is, likewise, preserved an epigram, by Johnson, on Colley Cibber and George

Epitaphium[a]

IN

THOMAM HANMER, Baronettum

Honorabilis admodum Thomas Hanmer,
Baronnettus,

Wilhelmi Hanmer armigeri, e Peregrina Henrici
North
De Mildenhall, in Com. Suffolciæ, baronetti sorore
et hærede,
Filius;
Johannis Hanmer de Hanmer baronetti
Hæres patruelis
Antiquo gentis suæ et titulo et patrimonio successit.
Duas uxores sortitus est;
Alteram Isabellam, honore a patre derivato, de
Arlington comitissam,
Deinde celsissimi principis, ducis de Grafton, viduam
dotariam:
Alteram Elizabetham, Thomæ Foulkes de Barton,
in Com. Suff. armigeri
Filiam et hæredem.
Inter humanitatis studia feliciter enutritus,

the second, whose illiberal treatment of artists and learned men was a constant theme of his execration. As it has not yet been inserted among Johnson's works, we will present it to the readers of the present edition, in this note.

Agustus still survives in Maro's strain,
And Spenser's verse prolongs Eliza's reign;
Great George's acts let tuneful Cibber sing;
For nature formed the poet for the king. Ed.

[a] At Hanmer church in Flintshire.

Omnes liberalium artium disciplinas avide arripuit,
Quas morum suavitate haud leviter ornavit.
Postquam excessit ex ephebis,
Continuo inter populares suos fama eminens,
Et comitatus sui legatus ad parliamentum missus,
Ad ardua regni negotia, per annos prope triginta,
se accinxit:
Cumque, apud illos amplissimorum virorum ordines,
Solent nihil temere effutire,
Sed probe perpensa diserte expromere,
Orator gravis et pressus,
Non minus integritatis quam eloquentiæ laude
commendatus,
Æque omnium, utcunque inter se alioqui
dissidentium,
Aures atque animos attraxit.
Annoque demum M.DCC.XIII. regnante Anna,
Felicissimæ florentissimæque memoriæ regina,
Ad prolocutoris cathedram,
Communi senatus universi voce, designatus est:
Quod munus,
Cum nullo tempore non difficile,
Tum illo certe, negotiis
Et variis, et lubricis, et implicatis, difficillimum,
Cum dignitate sustinuit.
Honores alios, et omnia quæ sibi in lucrum cederent
munera,
Sedulo detrectavit,
Ut rei totus inserviret publicæ;
Justi rectique tenax,
Et fide in patriam incorrupta notus.

Ubi omnibus, quæ virum civemque bonum decent,
officiis satisfecisset,
Paulatim se a publicis consiliis in otium recipiens,
inter literarum amœnitates,
Inter ante-actæ vitæ haud insuaves recordationes,
Inter amicorum convictus et amplexus,
Honorifice consenuit;
Et bonis omnibus, quibus charissimus vixit,
Desideratissimus obiit.
Hic, juxta cineres avi, suos condi voluit, et curavit
Gulielmus Bunbury B^ttus^, nepos et hæres.

Paraphrase of the Above Epitaph by Dr. Johnson[b].

Thou, who survey'st these walls with curious eye,
Pause at the tomb, where Hanmer's ashes lie;
His various worth, through vary'd life, attend,
And learn his virtues, while thou mourn'st his end.
His force of genius burn'd, in early youth,
With thirst of knowledge, and with love of truth;
His learning, join'd with each endearing art,
Charm'd ev'ry ear, and gain'd on ev'ry heart.
Thus early wise, th' endanger'd realm to aid,
His country call'd him from the studious shade;
In life's first bloom his publick toils began,
At once commenc'd the senator and man.
In bus'ness dext'rous, weighty in debate,
Thrice ten long years he labour'd for the state;

[b] This paraphrase is inserted in Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies. The Latin is there said to be written by Dr. Freind. Of the person whose memory it celebrates, a copious account may be seen in the appendix to the supplement to the Biographia Britannica.

In ev'ry speech persuasive wisdom flow'd,
In ev'ry act refulgent virtue glow'd:
Suspended faction ceas'd from rage and strife,
To hear his eloquence, and praise his life.
Resistless merit fix'd the senate's choice,
Who hail'd him speaker, with united voice.
Illustrious age! how bright thy glories shown,
When Hanmer fill'd the chair—and Anne the throne!
Then, when dark arts obscur'd each fierce debate,
When mutual frauds perplex'd the maze of state,
The moderator firmly mild appear'd—
Beheld with love—with veneration heard.
This task perform'd—he sought no gainful post,
Nor wish'd to glitter, at his country's cost:
Strict on the right he fix'd his steadfast eye,
With temp'rate zeal and wise anxiety;
Nor e'er from virtue's paths was lur'd aside,
To pluck the flow'rs of pleasure, or of pride.
Her gifts despis'd, corruption blush'd, and fled,
And fame pursu'd him, where conviction led.
Age call'd, at length, his active mind to rest,
With honour sated, and with cares oppress'd;
To letter'd ease retir'd, and honest mirth,
To rural grandeur and domestick worth;
Delighted still to please mankind, or mend,
The patriot's fire yet sparkled in the friend.
Calm conscience, then, his former life survey'd,
And recollected toils endear'd the shade,
Till nature call'd him to the gen'ral doom,
And virtue's sorrow dignified his tomb.

To Miss Hickman[c]

PLAYING ON THE SPINET

Bright Stella, form'd for universal reign,
Too well you know to keep the slaves you gain;
When in your eyes resistless lightnings play,
Aw'd into love our conquer'd hearts obey,
And yield reluctant to despotick sway:
But, when your musick sooths the raging pain,
We bid propitious heav'n prolong your reign,
We bless the tyrant, and we hug the chain.

When old Timotheus struck the vocal string,
Ambition's fury fir'd the Grecian king:
Unbounded projects lab'ring in his mind,
He pants for room, in one poor world confin'd.
Thus wak'd to rage, by musick's dreadful pow'r,
He bids the sword destroy, the flame devour.
Had Stella's gentle touches mov'd the lyre,
Soon had the monarch felt a nobler fire;
No more delighted with destructive war,
Ambitious only now to please the fair,
Resign'd his thirst of empire to her charms,
And found a thousand worlds in Stella's arms.

[c] These lines, which have been communicated by Dr. Turton, son to Mrs. Turton, the lady to whom they are addressed by her maiden name of Hickman, must have been written, at least, as early as 1734, as that was the year of her marriage: at how much earlier a period of Dr. Johnson's life they might have been written, is not known.

Paraphrase of Proverbs, Chap. IV

VERSES 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11

"Go to the Ant, Thou Sluggard[d]."

Turn on the prudent ant thy heedful eyes,
Observe her labours, sluggard, and be wise:
No stern command, no monitory voice,
Prescribes her duties, or directs her choice;
Yet, timely provident, she hastes away,
To snatch the blessings of the plenteous day;
When fruitful summer loads the teeming plain,
She crops the harvest, and she stores the grain.
How long shall sloth usurp thy useless hours,
Unnerve thy vigour, and enchain thy pow'rs;
While artful shades thy downy couch inclose,
And soft solicitation courts repose?
Amidst the drowsy charms of dull delight,
Year chases year with unremitted flight,
Till want now following, fraudulent and slow,
Shall spring to seize thee like an ambush'd foe.

Horace, Lib. IV. Ode VII. Translated

The snow, dissolv'd, no more is seen,
The fields and woods, behold! are green;
The changing year renews the plain,
The rivers know their banks again;
The sprightly nymph and naked grace
The mazy dance together trace;

[d] First printed in Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies.

The changing year's successive plan
Proclaims mortality to man;
Rough winter's blasts to spring give way,
Spring yields to summer's sov'reign ray;
Then summer sinks in autumn's reign,
And winter chills the world again;
Her losses soon the moon supplies,
But wretched man, when once he lies
Where Priam and his sons are laid,
Is nought but ashes and a shade.
Who knows if Jove, who counts our score,
Will toss us in a morning more?
What with your friend you nobly share,
At least you rescue from your heir.
Not you, Torquatus, boast of Rome,
When Minos once has fixed your doom,
Or eloquence, or splendid birth,
Or virtue, shall restore to earth.
Hippolytus, unjustly slain,
Diana calls to life in vain;
Nor can the might of Theseus rend
The chains of hell that hold his friend.

Nov. 1784.

The following translations, parodies, and burlesque verses, most of them extempore, are taken from Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson, published by Mrs. Piozzi.

Anacreon, Ode IX

Lovely courier of the sky,
Whence and whither dost thou fly?
Scatt'ring, as thy pinions play,
Liquid fragrance all the way:

Is it business? is it love?
Tell me, tell me, gentle dove.
Soft Anacreon's vows I bear,
Vows to Myrtale the fair;
Grac'd with all that charms the heart,
Blushing nature, smiling art.
Venus, courted by an ode,
On the bard her dove bestow'd:
Vested with a master's right,
Now Anacreon rules my flight;
His the letters that you see,
Weighty charge, consign'd to me:
Think not yet my service hard,
Joyless task without reward;
Smiling at my master's gates,
Freedom my return awaits;
But the lib'ral grant in vain
Tempts me to be wild again.
Can a prudent dove decline
Blissful bondage such as mine?
Over hills and fields to roam,
Fortune's guest without a home
Under leaves to hide one's head
Slightly shelter'd, coarsely fed:
Now my better lot bestows
Sweet repast and soft repose;
Now the gen'rous bowl I sip,
As it leaves Anacreon's lip:
Void of care, and free from dread,
From his fingers snatch his bread;
Then, with luscious plenty gay,

Round his chamber dance and play;
Or from wine, as courage springs,
O'er his face extend my wings;
And when feast and frolick tire,
Drop asleep upon his lyre.
This is all, be quick and go,
More than all thou canst not know;
Let me now my pinions ply,
I have chatter'd like a pie.

Lines

written in ridicule of certain poems published in 1777

Wheresoe'er I turn my view,
All is strange, yet nothing new;
Endless labour all along,
Endless labour to be wrong;
Phrase that time hath flung away,
Uncouth words in disarray,
Trick'd in antique ruff and bonnet,
Ode, and elegy, and sonnet.

Parody of a Translation

from the medea of euripides

Err shall they not, who resolute explore
Times gloomy backward with judicious eyes;
And, scanning right the practices of yore,
Shall deem our hoar progenitors unwise.

They to the dome, where smoke, with curling play,
Announc'd the dinner to the regions round,

Summon'd the singer blithe, and harper gay,
And aided wine with dulcet-streaming sound.

The better use of notes, or sweet or shrill,
By quiv'ring string or modulated wind;
Trumpet or lyre—to their harsh bosoms chill
Admission ne'er had sought, or could not find.

Oh! send them to the sullen mansions dun,
Her baleful eyes where sorrow rolls around;
Where gloom-enamour'd mischief loves to dwell,
And murder, all blood-bolter'd, schemes the wound.

When cates luxuriant pile the spacious dish,
And purple nectar glads the festive hour;
The guest, without a want, without a wish,
Can yield no room to musick's soothing pow'r.

Translation

FROM THE MEDEA OF EURIPIDES, v. 196[e].

The rites deriv'd from ancient days,
With thoughtless reverence we praise;
The rites that taught us to combine
The joys of musick and of wine,
And bade the feast, and song, and bowl
O'erfill the saturated soul:
But ne'er the flute or lyre applied
To cheer despair, or soften pride;

[e] The classical reader will, doubtless, be pleased to see the exquisite original in immediate comparison with this translation; we, therefore, subjoin it, and also Dr. J. Warton's imitation of the same passage.

Nor call'd them to the gloomy cells;
Where want repines and vengeance swells;
Where hate sits musing to betray,
And murder meditates his prey.
To dens of guilt and shades of care,
Ye sons of melody repair,
Nor deign the festive dome to cloy
With superfluities of joy.
Ah! little needs the minstrel's power
To speed the light convivial hour.

σκαιοὺς δὲ λέγων, κοὐδέν τι σοφοὺς
τοὺς πρόσθε βροτοὺς, οὐκ ἂν ἁμάρτοις,
οὕτινες ὕμνους ἐπὶ μὲν θαλίαις,
ἐπὶ δ' εἰλαπίναις, καὶ παρὰ δείπνοις
εὕροντο, βίον τερπνὰς ἀκοάς·
στυγίους δὲ βροτῶν οὐδεὶς λύπας
εὕρετο μοὺσῃ καὶ πολυχόρδοις
ᾠδαῖς παύειν, ἐξὧν θάνατοι,
δειναί τε τύχαι σφάλλουσι δόμους.
καίτοι τάδε μὲν κέρδος ἀκεῖσθαι
μολπαῖσι βροτούς· ἵνα δ' εὐδείπνοι
δαῖτες, τί μάτην τείνουσι βοάν;
τὸ πορὸν γὰρ ἔει τέρψιν ἀφ' αὑτοῦ
δαιτὸς πλήρωμα βροτοῖσιν.

MEDEA, 193—206. ED. PORS.

Queen of every moving measure,
Sweetest source of purest pleasure,
Music! why thy pow'rs employ
Only for the sons of joy;
Only for the smiling guests,
At natal or at nuptial feasts?
Rather thy lenient numbers pour
On those, whom secret griefs devour.
Bid be still the throbbing hearts
Of those whom death or absence parts,

And, with some softly whisper'd air,
Sooth the brow of dumb despair.
The board, with varied plenty crown'd,
May spare the luxuries of sound [f].

Translation

OF THE FIRST TWO STANZAS OF THE SONG "RIO VERDE, RIO VERDE," PRINTED IN BISHOP PERCY'S RELIQUES OF ANCIENT ENGLISH POETRY

An Impromptu

Glassy water, glassy water,
Down whose current, clear and strong,
Chiefs confused in mutual slaughter,
Moor and christian roll along.

Imitation of the style of ****

Hermit hoar, in solemn cell
Wearing out live's ev'ning grey,
Strike thy bosom, sage, and tell
What is bliss, and which the way.

Thus I spoke, and speaking sigh'd,
Scarce repress'd the starting tear,
When the hoary sage reply'd,
Come, my lad, and drink some beer.

[f] This translation was written by Johnson for his friend Dr. Burney, and was inserted, as the work of "a learned friend," in that gentleman's History of Musick, vol. ii. p. 340. It has always been ascribed to Johnson; but, to put the matter beyond a doubt, Mr. Malone ascertained the fact by applying to Dr. Burney himself. J. B.

Burlesque

of the following lines of lopez de vega

An Impromptu

Se a quien los leones vence
  Vence una muger hermosa,
O el de flaco avergonze,
  O ella di ser mas furiosa.

If the man who turnips cries,
Cry not when his father dies,
'Tis a proof, that he had rather
Have a turnip than his father.

Translation

of the following lines at the end of baretti's easy phraseology

An Impromptu

Viva, viva la padrona!
Tutta bella, e tutta buona,
La padrona è un' angiolella
Tutta buona e tutta bella;
Tutta bella e tutta buona;
Viva! viva la padrona!

Long may live my lovely Hetty!
Always young, and always pretty;
Always pretty, always young,
Live, my lovely Hetty, long!
Always young, and always pretty,
Long may live my lovely Hetty!

Improviso Translation

OF THE FOLLOWING DISTICH ON THE DUKE OF MODENA'S RUNNING AWAY FROM THE COMET IN 1742 OR 1743

Se al venir vostro i principi sen' vanno
Deh venga ogni dì—durate un' anno.

If at your coming princes disappear,
Comets! come every day—and stay a year.

Improviso Translation

OF THE FOLLOWING LINES OF M. BENSERADE

A Son Lit

Theatre des ris, et des pleurs,
Lit! où je nais, et où je meurs,
Tu nous fais voir comment voisins
Sont nos plaisirs, et nos chagrins.

In bed we laugh, in bed we cry,
And, born in bed, in bed we die;
The near approach a bed may show
Of human bliss to human woe.

Epitaph for Mr. Hogarth

The hand of him here torpid lies,
  That drew th' essential form of grace;
Here clos'd in death th' attentive eyes,
  That saw the manners in the face.

Translation

OF THE FOLLOWING LINES, WRITTEN UNDER A PRINT REPRESENTING PERSONS SKATING

Sur un mince cristal l'hiver conduit leurs pas,
Le précipice est sous la glace:
Telle est de nos plaisirs la légère surface:
Glissez, mortels; n'appuyez pas.

O'er ice the rapid skater flies,
With sport above, and death below;
Where mischief lurks in gay disguise,
Thus lightly touch and quickly go.

IMPROMPTU TRANSLATION OF THE SAME

O'er crackling ice, o'er gulfs profound,
With nimble glide the skaters play;
O'er treach'rous pleasure's flow'ry ground
Thus lightly skim, and haste away.

To Mrs. Thrale

ON HER COMPLETING HER THIRTY-FIFTH YEAR

An Impromptu

Oft in danger, yet alive,
We are come to thirty-five;
Long may better years arrive,
Better years than thirty-five!
Could philosophers contrive
Life to stop at thirty-five,
Time his hours should never drive
O'er the bounds of thirty-five.

High to soar, and deep to dive,
Nature gives at thirty-five.
Ladies, stock and tend your hive,
Trifle not at thirty-five;
For, howe'er we boast and strive,
Life declines from thirty-five.
He that ever hopes to thrive
Must begin by thirty-five;
And all, who wisely wish to wive,
Must look on Thrale at thirty-five.

Impromptu Translation

of an air in the Clemenza di Tito of Metastasio

Beginning "Deh Se Piacermi Vuoi"

Would you hope to gain my heart,
Bid your teasing doubts depart;
He, who blindly trusts, will find
Faith from ev'ry gen'rous mind:
He, who still expects deceit,
Only teaches how to cheat.

Translation

of a speech of Aquileio, in the Adriano of Metastasio

Beginning "Tu Che in Corte Invecchiasti[g]."

Grown old in courts, thou surely art not one
Who keeps the rigid rules of ancient honour;
Well skill'd to sooth a foe with looks of kindness,

[g] The character of Cali, in Irene, is a masterly sketch of the old and practised dissembler of a despotic court.—Ed.

To sink the fatal precipice before him,
And then lament his fall, with seeming friendship:
Open to all, true only to thyself, [praise,
Thou know'st those arts, which blast with envious
Which aggravate a fault, with feign'd excuses,
And drive discountenanc'd virtue from the throne;
That leave the blame of rigour to the prince,
And of his ev'ry gift usurp the merit;
That hide, in seeming zeal, a wicked purpose,
And only build upon another's ruin.

Burlesque

OF THE MODERN VERSIFICATIONS OF ANCIENT LEGENDARY TALES

An Impromptu

The tender infant, meek and mild,
Fell down upon the stone:
The nurse took up the squealing child,
But still the child squeal'd on.

Friendship

AN ODE[h].

Friendship, peculiar boon of heaven,
The noble mind's delight and pride,
To men and angels only given,
To all the lower world deny'd.

[h] This ode originally appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1743. See Boswell's Life of Johnson, under that year. It was afterwards printed in Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies, in 1766, with several variations, which are pointed out, on next page.—J. B.

While love, unknown among the blest,
Parent of thousand wild desires[i],
The savage and the human breast
Torments alike with raging fires[j];

With bright, but oft destructive, gleam,
Alike, o'er all his lightnings fly;
Thy lambent glories only beam
Around the fav'rites of the sky.

Thy gentle flows of guiltless joys
On fools and villains ne'er descend;
In vain for thee the tyrant sighs[k],
And hugs a flatt'rer for a friend.

Directress of the brave and just[l],
O! guide us through life's darksome way!
And let the tortures of mistrust
On selfish bosoms only prey.

Nor shall thine ardours cease to glow[m],
When souls to blissful climes remove:
What rais'd our virtue here below,
Shall aid our happiness above.

[i] Parent of rage and hot desires.—Mrs. W.

[j] Inflames alike with equal fires.

[k] In vain for thee the *monarch* sighs.

[l] This stanza is omitted in Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies, and instead of it, we have the following, which may be suspected, from internal evidence, not to have been Johnson's:

When virtues, kindred virtues meet,
And sister-souls together join,
Thy pleasures permanent, as great,
Are all transporting—all divine.

[m] O! shall thy flames then cease to glow.

On Seeing a Bust of Mrs. Montague

Had this fair figure, which this frame displays,
Adorn'd in Roman time the brightest days,
In every dome, in every sacred place,
Her statue would have breath'd an added grace,
And on its basis would have been enroll'd,
"This is Minerva, cast in virtue's mold."

Improviso

on a young heir's coming of age

Long expected one-and-twenty,
Ling'ring year, at length is flown;
Pride and pleasure, pomp and plenty,
Great —— ——, are now your own.

Loosen'd from the minor's tether,
Free to mortgage or to sell;
Wild as wind, and light as feather,
Bid the sons of thrift farewell.

Call the Betseys, Kates, and Jennies,
All the names that banish care;
Lavish of your grandsire's guineas,
Show the spirit of an heir.

All that prey on vice or folly
Joy to see their quarry fly:
There the gamester light and jolly,
There the lender grave and sly.

Wealth, my lad, was made to wander,
Let it wander as it will;
Call the jockey, call the pander,
Bid them come, and take their fill.

When the bonny blade carouses,
Pockets full, and spirits high—
What are acres? what are houses?
Only dirt, or wet or dry.

Should the guardian friend, or mother
Tell the woes of wilful waste;
Scorn their counsel, scorn their pother,
You can hang or drown at last.

EPITAPHS

At Lichfield

H. S. E.

Michael Johnson

Vir impavidus, constans, animosus, periculorum immemor, laborum patientissimus; fiducia christiana fortis, fervidusque; paterfamilias apprime strenuus; bibliopola admodum peritus; mente et libris et negotiis exculta; animo ita firmo, ut, rebus adversis diu conflictatus, nec sibi nec suis defuerit; lingua sic temperata, ut ei nihil quod aures vel pias vel castas læsisset, aut dolor vel voluptas unquam expresserit.

Natus Cubleiæ, in agro Derbiensi, anno MDCLVI; obijt MDCCXXXI.

Apposita est Sara, conjux,

Antiqua Fordorum gente oriunda; quam domi sedulam, foris paucis notam; nulli molestam, mentis acumine et judicii subtilitate præcellentem; aliis multum, sibi parum indulgentem: æternitati semper attentam, omne fere virtutis nomen commendavit.

Nata Nortoniæ Regis, in agro Varvicensi, anno MDCLXIX; obijt MDCCLIX.

Cum Nathanaele, illorum filio, qui natus MDCCXII. cum vires et animi et corporis multa pollicerentur, anno MDCCXXXVII. vitam brevem pia morte finivit.

EPITAPHS

In Bromley Church

Hic conduntur reliquiæ
Elizabethæ
Antiqua Jarvisiorum gente
Peatlingæ, apud Leicestrenses, ortæ;
Formosæ, cultæ, ingeniosæ, piæ;
Uxoris, primis nuptiis, Henrici Porter,
secundis, Samuelis Johnson,
Qui multum amatam, diuque defletam,
Hoc lapide contexit.
Obijt Londini, mense Mart.
A. D. mdcclxiii.

In Watford Church

In the vault below are deposited the remains of
Jane Bell[n], wife of John Bell, esq.
who, in the fifty-third year of her age,
surrounded with many worldly blessings,
heard, with fortitude and composure truly great,
the horrible malady, which had, for some time, begun to afflict her,
pronounced incurable;
and for more than three years,
endured with patience, and concealed with decency,
the daily tortures of gradual death;
continued to divide the hours not allotted to devotion,
between the cares of her family, and the converse of her friends;

[n] She died in October, 1771.

rewarded the attendance of duty,
and acknowledged the offices of affection;
and, while she endeavoured to alleviate by cheerfulness her husband's sufferings and sorrows,
increased them by her gratitude for his care,
and her solicitude for his quiet.
To the testimony of these virtues,
more highly honoured, as more familiarly known,
this monument is erected by
JOHN BELL.

IN STRETHAM CHURCH

JUXTA sepulta est HESTERA MARIA,
Thomæ Cotton de Combermere, baronetti Cestriensis, filia.
Johannis Salusbury, armigeri Flintiensis uxor,
Forma felix, felix ingenio;
Omnibus jucunda, suorum amantissima,
Linguis artibusque ita exculta,
Ut loquenti nunquam deessent
Sermonis nitor, sententiarum flosculi,
Sapientiæ gravitas leporum gratia:
Modum servandi adeo perita,
Ut domestica inter negotia literis oblectaretur;
Literarum inter delicias, rem familiarem sedulo curaret.
Multis illi multos annos precantibus
diri carcinomatis veneno contabuit,
nexibusque vitæ paulatim resolutis,
e terris, meliora sperans, emigravit.
Nata 1707. Nupta 1739. Obijt 1773.

EPITAPHS

In Westminster Abbey

Olivarii Goldsmith,
Poetæ, Physici, Historici,
Qui nullum fere scribendi genus
Non tetigit,
Nullum quod tetigit non ornavit:
Sive risus essent movendi,
Sive lacrimæ,
Affectuum potens, at lenis, dominator:
Ingenio sublimis, vividus, versatilis,
Oratione grandis, nitidus, venustus:
Hoc monumento memoriam coluit
Sodalium amor,
Amicorum fides,
Lectorum veneratio.
Elfiniæ, in Hibernia, natus MDCCXXIX.
Eblanæ literis institutus:
Londini obijt MDCCLXXIV°.

° This is the epitaph, that drew from Gibbon, sir J. Reynolds, Sheridan, Joseph Warton, &c. the celebrated *Round Robin*, composed by Burke, intreating Johnson to write an English epitaph on an English author. His reply was, in the genuine spirit of an old scholar, "he would never consent to disgrace the walls of Westminster abbey with an English inscription." One of his arguments, in favour of a common learned language, was ludicrously cogent: "Consider, sir, how you should feel, were you to find, at Rotterdam, an epitaph, upon Erasmus, in *Dutch*!" Boswell, iii. He would, however, undoubtedly have written a better epitaph in English, than in Latin. His compositions in that language are not of first rate excellence, either in prose or verse. The epitaph, in Stretham church, on Mr. Thrale, abounds with inaccuracies; and those who are fond of detecting little blunders in great men, may be amply gratified in the perusal of a review of Thrale's epitaph in the Classical Journal, xii. 6. His Greek

EPITAPHS

In Stretham Church

Hic conditur quod reliquum est
Henrici Thrale,
Qui res seu civiles, seu domesticas, ita egit,
Ut vitam illi longiorem multi optarent;
Ita sacras,
Ut quam brevem esset habiturus præscire videretur;
Simplex, apertus, sibique semper similis,
Nihil ostentavit aut arte fictum, aut cura elaboratum.
In senatu, regi patriæque
Fideliter studuit,
Vulgi obstrepentis contemptor animosus;
Domi, inter mille mercaturæ negotia,
Literarum elegantiam minime neglexit.
Amicis, quocunque modo laborantibus,
Consiliis, auctoritate, muneribus, adfuit.
Inter familiares, comites, convivas, hospites,
Tam facili fuit morum suavitate
Ut omnium animos ad se alliceret;
Tam felici sermonis libertate,
Ut nulli adulatus, omnibus placeret.
Natus 1724, Obijt 1781.

epitaph on Goldsmith, is not remarkable in itself, but we will subjoin it, in this place, as a literary curiosity.

Τὸν τάφον εἰσοράας τόν ΟΛΙΒΑΡΟΙΟ, κονίην
Ἄφροσι μὴ σεμνὴν, Ξεῖνε, πόδεσσι πάτει.
Οἵσι μέμηλε φύσις, μέτρων χάρις, ἔργα παλαιῶν,
Κλαίετε ποιητὴν, ἱστορίκον, φυσικόν. Ed.

Consortes tumuli habet Rodolphum, patrem,
strenuum fortemque virum, et Henricum,
filium unicum, quem spei parentum
mors inopina decennem proripuit.
Ita
Domus felix et opulenta quam erexit
Avus, auxitque pater, cum nepote decidit.
Abi, Viator,
Et, vicibus rerum humanarum perspectis,
Æternitatem cogita!

POEMATA

Messia[p].

Ex alieno ingenio poeta, ex suo tantum versificator. Scalig. Poet.

Tollite concentum, Solymææ tollite nymphæ,
Nil mortale loquor; cœlum mihi carminis alta
Materies; poscunt gravius cœlestia plectrum.
Muscosi fontes, sylvestria tecta, valete,
Aonidesque deæ, et mendacis somnia Pindi:
Tu, mihi, qui flamma movisti pectora sancti
Siderea Isaiæ, dignos accende furores!
Immatura calens rapitur per secula vates
Sic orsus—Qualis rerum mihi nascitur ordo!
Virgo! virgo parit! Felix radicibus arbor
Jessæis surgit, mulcentesque æthera flores
Cœlestes lambunt animæ, ramisque columba,
Nuncia sacra Dei, plaudentibus insidet alis.
Nectareos rores, alimentaque mitia cœlum
Præbeat, et tacite fœcundos irriget imbres.
Huc, fœdat quos lepra, urit quos febris, adeste,
Dia salutares spirant medicamina rami;

[p] This translation has been severely criticised by Dr. Warton, in his edition of Pope, vol. i, p. 105, 8vo. 1797. It certainly contains some expressions that are not classical. Let it be remembered, however, that it was a college exercise, performed with great rapidity, and was, at first, praised, beyond all suspicion of defect.— This translation was first published in a Miscellany of Poems by several hands. Published by J. Husbands, A.M. fellow of Pembroke college, Oxon. 8vo. Oxford, 1731. Of Johnson's production, Mr. Husbands says, in his preface, "The translation of Mr. Pope's Messiah was delivered to his tutor as a college exercise, by Mr. Johnson, a commoner of Pembroke college in Oxford, and 'tis hoped will be no discredit to the excellent original." Mr. Husbands died in the following year.

Hic requies fessis: non sacra sævit in umbra
Vis boreæ gelida: aut rapidi violentia solis.
Irrita vanescent priscæ vestigia fraudis,
Justitiæque manus, pretio intemerata, bilancem
Attollet reducis; bellis prætendet olivas
Compositis pax alma suas, terrasque revisens
Sedatas niveo virtus lucebit amictu.—
Volvantur celeres anni! lux purpuret ortum
Expectata diu! naturæ claustra refringens,
Nascere, magne puer! tibi primas, ecce, corollas
Deproperat tellus, fundit tibi munera, quicquid
Carpit Arabs, hortis quicquid frondescit Eois;
Altius, en! Lebanon gaudentia culmina tollit;
En! summo exultant nutantes vertice sylvæ:
Mittit aromaticas vallis Saronica nubes,
Et juga Carmeli recreant fragrantia cœlum.
Deserti læta mollescunt aspera voce:
Auditur Deus! ecce Deus! reboantia circum
Saxa sonant, Deus! ecce Deus! deflectitur æther,
Demissumque Deum tellus capit; ardua cedrus,
Gloria sylvarum, dominum inclinata salutet:
Surgite convalles, tumidi subsidite montes!
Sternite saxa viam, rapidi discedite fluctus;
En! quem turba diu cecinerunt enthea, vates,
En! salvator adest; vultus agnoscite, cæci,
Divinos, surdos sacra vox permulceat aures.
Ille cutim spissam visus hebetare vetabit,
Reclusisque oculis infundet amabile lumen;
Obstrictasque diu linguas in carmina solvet.
Ille vias vocis pandet, flexusque liquentis
Harmoniæ purgata novos mirabitur auris.

Accrescunt teneris tactu nova robora nervis:
Consuetus fulcro innixus reptare bacilli
Nunc saltu capreas, nunc cursu provocat euros,
Non planctus, non mœsta sonant suspiria; pectus
Singultans mulcet, lachrymantes tergit ocellos.
Vincla coercebunt luctantem adamantina mortem,
Æternoque orci dominator vulnere languens
Invalidi raptos sceptri plorabit honores.
Ut, qua dulce strepunt scatebræ, qua læta virescunt
Pascua, qua blandum spirat purissimus aer,
Pastor agit pecudes, teneros modo suscipit agnos,
Et gremio fotis selectas porrigit herbas,
Amissas modo quærit oves, revocatque vagantes;
Fidus adest custos, seu nox furat humida nimbis,
Sive dies medius morientia torreat arva.
Postera sic pastor divinus secla beabit,
Et curas felix patrias testabitur orbis.
Non ultra infestis concurrent agmina signis,
Hostiles oculis flammas jaculantia torvis;
Non litui accendent bellum, non campus ahenis
Triste coruscabit radiis; dabit hasta recusa
Vomerem, et in falcem rigidus curvabitur ensis.
Atria, pacis opus, surgent, finemque caduci
Natus ad optatum perducet cœpta parentis.
Qui duxit sulcos, illi teret area messem,
Et seræ texent vites umbracula proli.
Attoniti dumeta vident inculta coloni
Suave rubere rosis, sitientesque inter arenas
Garrula mirantur salientis murmura rivi.
Per saxa, ignivomi nuper spelæa draconis,
Canna viret, juncique tremit variabilis umbra.

Horruit implexo qua vallis sente, figuræ
Surgit amans abies teretis, buxique sequaces
Artificis frondent dextræ; palmisque rubeta
Aspera, odoratæ cedunt mala gramina myrto.
Per valles sociata lupo lasciviet agna,
Cumque leone petet tutus præsepe juvencus.
Florea mansuetæ petulantes vincula tigri
Per ludum pueri injicient, et fessa colubri
Membra viatoris recreabunt frigore linguæ.
Serpentes teneris nil jam lethale micantes
Tractabit palmis infans, motusque trisulcæ
Ridebit linguæ innocuos, squamasque virentes
Aureaque admirans rutilantis fulgura cristæ.
Indue reginam, turritæ frontis honores
Tolle Salema sacros, quam circum gloria pennas
Explicat, incinctam radiatæ luce tiaræ!
En! formosa tibi spatiosa per atria proles
Ordinibus, surgit densis, vitamque requirit
Impatiens, lenteque fluentes increpat annos.
Ecce pere grinis fervent tua limina turbis;
Barbarus, en! clarum divino lumine templum
Ingreditur, cultuque tuo mansuescere gaudet.
Cinnameos cumulos, Nabathæi munera veris,
Ecce! cremant genibus tritæ regalibus aræ.
Solis Ophyræis crudum tibi montibus aurum
Maturant radii; tibi balsama sudat Idume.
Ætheris en! portas sacro fulgore micantes
Cœlicolæ pandunt, torrentis aurea lucis
Flumina prorumpunt; non posthac sole rubescet
India nascenti, placidæve argentea noctis
Luna vices revehet; radios pater ipse diei

Proferet archetypos; cœlestis gaudia lucis
Ipso fonte bibes, quæ circumfusa beatam
Regiam inundabit, nullis cessura tenebris.
Littora deficiens arentia deseret æquor;
Sidera fumabunt, diro labefacta tremore
Saxa cadent, solidique liquescent robora montes:
Tu secura tamen confusa elementa videbis,
Lætaque Messia semper dominabere rege,
Pollicitis firmata Dei, stabilita ruinis.

[Jan. 20, 21, 1773]

Vitæ qui varias vices
Rerum perpetuus temperat arbiter,
Læto cedere lumini
Noctis tristitiam qui gelidæ jubet,
Acri sanguine turgidos,
Obductosque oculos nubibus humidis
Sanari voluit meos;
Et me, cuncta beans cui nocuit dies,
Luci reddidit et mihi.
Qua te laude, Deus, qua prece prosequar?
Sacri discipulis libri
Te semper studiis utilibus colam:
Grates, summe pater, tuis
Recte qui fruitur muneribus, dedit.

[Dec. 25, 1779]

Nunc dies Christo memoranda nato
Fulsit, in pectus mihi fonte purum
Gaudium sacro fluat, et benigni
Gratia cœli!

Christe, da tutam trepido quietem,
Christe, spem præsta stabilem timenti;
Da fidem certam, precibusque fidis
Annue, Christe.

[In lecto, die passionis, Apr. 13, 1781]

Summe Deus, qui semper amas quodcunque creasti;
Judice quo, scelerum est pœnituisse salus:
Da veteres noxas animo sic flere novato,
Per Christum ut veniam sit reperire mihi.

[In lecto, Dec. 25, 1782]

Spe non inani confugis,
Peccator, ad latus meum;
Quod poscis, haud unquam tibi
Negabitur solatium.

[Nocte, inter 16 et 17 Junii, 1783[q].]

Summe pater, quodcunque tuum[r] de corpore Numen[s]
Hoc statuat[t], precibus[u] Christus adesse velit:
Ingenio parcas, nec sit mihi culpa rogasse[v],
Qua solum potero parte, placere[w] tibi.

[q] The night, above referred to by Dr. Johnson, was that, in which a paralytic stroke had deprived him of his voice; and, in the anxiety he felt, lest it should, likewise, have impaired his understanding, he composed the above lines, and said, concerning them, that he knew, at the time, that they were not good, but then, that he deemed his discerning this to be sufficient for quieting the anxiety before mentioned, as it showed him, that his power of judging was not diminished.

[r] Al. tuæ. [s] Al. leges. [t] Al. statuant.
[u] Al. votis. [v] Al. precari. [w] Al. litare.

[Cal. Jan. in lecto, ante lucem, 1784]

Summe dator vitæ, naturæ æterne magister,
Causarum series quo moderante fluit,
Respice quem subiget senium, morbique seniles,
Quem terret vitæ meta propinqua suæ,
Respice inutiliter lapsi quem pœnitet ævi;
Recte ut pœniteat, respice, magne parens.

Pater benigne, summa semper lenitas,
Crimine gravatam plurimo mentem leva:
Concede veram pœnitentiam, precor,
Concede agendam legibus vitam tuis.
Sacri vagantes luminis gressus face
Rege, et tuere; quæ nocent pellens procul:
Veniam petenti, summe, da veniam, pater;
Veniæque sancta pacis adde gaudia:
Sceleris ut expers, omni et vacuus metu,
Te, mente pura, mente tranquilla colam,
Mihi dona morte hæc impetret Christus sua.

[Jan. 18, 1784]

Summe pater, puro collustra lumine pectus,
Anxietas noceat ne tenebrosa mihi.
In me sparsa manu virtutum semina larga
Sic ale, proveniat messis ut ampla boni.
Noctes atque dies animo spes læta recurset;
Certa mihi sancto flagret amore fides;
Certa vetat dubitare fides, spes læta timere;
Velle vetet cuiquam non bene sanctus amor.

Da, ne sint permissa, pater, mihi præmia frustra,
Et colere, et leges semper amare tuas.
Hæc mihi, quo gentes, quo secula, Christe, piasti,
Sanguine, precanti promereare tuo!

[Feb. 27, 1784]

Mens mea, quid quereris? veniet tibi mollior hora
In summo ut videas numine læta patrem;
Divinam insontes iram placavit Iesus;
Nunc est pro pœna pœnituisse reis.

Christianus Perfectus

Qui cupit in sanctos, Christo cogente, referri,
Abstergat mundi labem, nec gaudia carnis
Captans, nec fastu tumidus, semperque futuro
Instet, et evellens terroris spicula corde,
Suspiciat tandem clementem in numine patrem.
Huic quoque, nec genti nec sectæ noxius ulli,
Sit sacer orbis amor, miseris qui semper adesse
Gestiat, et, nullo pietatis limite clausus,
Cunctorum ignoscat vitiis, pietate fruatur.
Ardeat huic toto sacer ignis pectore, possit
Ut vitam, poscat si res, impendere vero.
Cura placere Deo sit prima, sit ultima; sanctæ
Irruptum vitæ cupiat servare tenorem;
Et sibi, delirans quanquam et peccator in horas
Displiceat, servet tutum sub pectore rectum:
Nec natet, et nunc has partes, nunc eligat illas,
Nec dubitet quem dicat herum, sed, totus in uno,
Se fidum addicat Christo, mortalia temnens.

Sed timeat semper, caveatque ante omnia, turbæ
Ne stolidæ similis, leges sibi segreget audax
Quas servare velit, leges quas lentus omittat,
Plenum opus effugiens, aptans juga mollia collo,
Sponte sua demens; nihilum decedere summæ
Vult Deus, at qui cuncta dedit tibi, cuncta reposcit.
Denique perpetuo contendit in ardua nisu,
Auxilioque Dei fretus, jam mente serena
Pergit, et imperiis sentit se dulcibus actum.
Paulatim mores, animum, vitamque refingit,
Effigiemque Dei, quantum servare licebit,
Induit, et, terris major, cœlestia spirat.

Æterne rerum conditor,
Salutis æternæ dator;
Felicitatis sedibus
Qui nec scelestos exigis,
Quoscumque scelerum pœnitet;
Da, Christe, pœnitentiam,
Veniamque, Christe, da mihi;
Ægrum trahenti spiritum
Succurre præsens corpori;
Multo gravatam crimine
Mentem benignus alleva.

Luce collustret mihi pectus alma,
Pellat et tristes animi tenebras,
Nec sinat semper tremere ac dolere,
Gratia Christi.
Me pater tandem reducem benigno
Summus amplexu foveat, beato

Me gregi sanctus socium beatum
Spiritus addat.

Jejunium et Cibus

Serviat ut menti corpus jejunia serva,
Ut mens utatur corpore, sume cibos.

Ad Urbanum[x], 1738

Urbane, nullis fesse laboribus,
Urbane, nullis victe calumniis,
Cui fronte sertum in erudita
Perpetuo viret, et virebit;
Quid moliatur gens imitantium,
Quid et minetur, solicitus parum,
Vacare solis perge musis,
Juxta animo, studiisque fœlix
Linguæ procacis plumbea spicula,
Fidens, superbo frange silentio;
Victrix per obstantes catervas
Sedulitas animosa tendet.
Intende nervos fortis, inanibus
Risurus olim nisibus emuli;
Intende jam nervos, habebis
Participes opera Camœnas.
Non ulla musis pagina gratior,
Quam quæ severis ludicra jungere
Novit, fatigatamque nugis
Utilibus recreare mentem.

[x] See Gent. Mag. vol. viii. p. 156; and see also the Introduction to vol. liv.

Texente nymphis serta Lycoride,
Rosæ ruborem sic viola adjuvat
Immista, sic Iris refulget
Æthereis variata fucis.

IN RIVUM A MOLA STOANA LICHFELDIÆ DIFFLUENTEM

Errat adhuc vitreus per prata virentia rivus,
Quo toties lavi membra tenella puer;
Hic delusa rudi frustrabar brachia motu.
Dum docuit, blanda voce, natare pater.
Fecerunt rami latebras, tenebrisque diurnis
Pendula secretas abdidit arbor aquas.
Nunc veteres duris periere securibus umbræ,
Longinquisque oculis nuda lavacra patent.
Lympha, tamen, cursus agit indefessa perennis,
Tectaque qua fluxit, nunc et aperta fluit.
Quid ferat externi velox, quid deterat ætas,
Tu quoque securus res age, Nise, tuas.

ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ[y].

[Post Lexicon Anglicanum auctum et emendatum]

Lexicon ad finem longo luctamine tandem
Scaliger ut duxit, tenuis pertæsus opellæ,
Vile indignatus studium, nugasque molestas
Ingemit exosus, scribendaque lexica mandat
Damnatis, pœnam pro pœnis omnibus unam.
Ille quidem recte, sublimis, doctus et acer,
Quem decuit majora sequi, majoribus aptum,

[y]For a translation of this poem, see Murphy's Essay on the Life and Genius of Dr. Johnson, prefixed to the present volume.

Qui veterum modo facta ducum, modo carmina vatum,
Gesserat, et quicquid virtus, sapientia quicquid
Dixerat, imperiique vices, cœlique meatus,
Ingentemque animo seclorum volveret orbem.
Fallimur exemplis; temere sibi turba scholarum
Ima tuas credit permitti, Scaliger, iras.
Quisque suum norit modulum; tibi, prime virorum,
Ut studiis sperem, aut ausim par esse querelis,
Non mihi sorte datum; lenti seu sanguinis obsint
Frigora, seu nimium longo jacuisse veterno,
Sive mihi mentem dederit natura minorem.
Te sterili functum cura, vocumque salebris
Tuto eluctatum, spatiis sapientia dia
Excipit æthereis, ars omnis plaudit amico,
Linguarumque omni terra discordia concors
Multiplici reducem circumsonat ore magistrum.
Me, pensi immunis cum jam mihi reddor, inertis
Desidiæ sors dura manet, graviorque labore
Tristis et atra quies, et tardæ tædia vitæ.
Nascuntur curis curæ, vexatque dolorum
Importuna cohors, vacuæ mala somnia mentis.
Nunc clamosa juvant nocturnæ gaudia mensæ,
Nunc loca sola placent; frustrate, somne, recumbens,
Alme voco, impatiens noctis, metuensque diei.
Omnia percurro trepidus, circum omnia lustro,
Si qua usquam pateat melioris semita vitæ,
Nec quid agam invenio; meditatus grandia, cogor
Notior ipse mihi fieri, incultumque fateri
Pectus, et ingenium vano se robore jactans.
Ingenium, nisi materiem doctrina ministrat,

Cessat inops rerum, ut torpet, si marmoris absit
Copia, Phidiaci fœcunda potentia cœli.
Quicquid agam, quocunque ferar, conatibus obstat
Res angusta domi, et macræ penuria mentis.
Non rationis opes animus, nunc parta recensens
Conspicit aggestas, et se miratur in illis,
Nec sibi de gaza præsens quod postulat usus
Summus adesse jubet celsa dominator ab arce;
Non, operum serie seriem dum computat ævi,
Præteritis fruitur, lætos aut sumit honores
Ipse sui judex, actæ bene munera vitæ;
Sed sua regna videns, loca nocte silentia late
Horret, ubi vanæ species, umbræque fugaces,
Et rerum volitant raræ per inane figuræ.
Quid faciam? tenebrisne pigram damnare senectam
Restat? an accingar studiis gravioribus audax?
Aut, hoc si nimium est, tandem nova lexica poscam?

Ad Thomam Laurence
medicum doctissimum

Cum filium peregre agentem desiderio nimis tristi prosequeretur

Fateris ergo, quod populus solet
Crepare vecors, nil sapientiam
Prodesse vitæ, literasque
In dubiis dare terga rebus.

Tu, queis laborat sors hominum, mala
Nec vincis acer, nec pateris pius;
Te mille succorum potentem
Destituit medicina mentis.

Per cæca noctis tædia turbidæ,
Pigræ per horas lucis inutiles,
  Torpesque, languescisque, curis
    Solicitus nimis heu! paternis.

Tandem dolori plus satis est datum,
Exsurge fortis, nunc animis opus,
  Te, docta, Laurenti, vetustas,
    Te medici revocant labores.

Permitte summo quicquid habes patri,
Permitte fidens; et mulieribus,
  Amice, majorem querelis
    Redde tuis, tibi redde, mentem.

In Theatro, March 8, 1771

Tertii verso quater orbe lustri,
Quid theatrales tibi, Crispe, pompæ?
Quam decet canos male litteratos
                Sera voluptas!
Tene mulceri fidibus canoris?
Tene cantorum modulis stupere?
Tene per pictas, oculo elegante,
                Currere formas?
Inter æquales, sine felle liber,
Codices, veri studiosus, inter
Rectius vives. Sua quisque carpat
                Gaudia gratus.
Lusibus gaudet puer otiosis,
Luxus oblectat juvenem theatri,
At seni fluxo sapienter uti
                Tempore restat.

Insula Kennethi, Inter Hebridas

Parva quidem regio, sed religione priorum
Clara, Caledonias panditur inter aquas.
Voce ubi Cennethus populos domuisse feroces
Dicitur, et vanos dedocuisse deos.
Huc ego delatus placido per cærulea cursu,
Scire locus volui quid daret iste novi.
Illic Leniades humili regnabat in aula,
Leniades, magnis nobilitatus avis.
Una duas cepit casa cum genitore puellas,
Quas amor undarum crederet esse deas.
Nec tamen inculti gelidis latuere sub antris,
Accola Danubii qualia sævus habet.
Mollia non desunt vacuæ solatia vitæ,
Sive libros poscant otia, sive lyram.
Fulserat illa dies, legis qua docta supernæ
Spes hominum et curas gens procul esse jubet.
Ut precibus justas avertat numinis iras,
Et summi accendat pectus amore boni.
Ponte inter strepitus non sacri munera cultus
Cessarunt, pietas hic quoque cura fuit:
Nil opus est æris sacra de turre sonantis
Admonitu, ipsa suas nunciat hora vices.
Quid, quod sacrifici versavit fœmina libros?
Sint pro legitimis pura labella sacris—
Quo vagor ulterius? quod ubique requiritur hic est;
Hic secura quies, hic et honestus amor.

Skia

Ponti profundis clausa recessibus,
Strepens procellis, rupibus obsita,
  Quam grata defesso virentem,
    Skia, sinum nebulosa pandis!

His cura, credo, sedibus exulat;
His blanda certe pax habitat locis;
  Non ira, non mœror quietis
    Insidias méditatur horis.

At non cavata rupe latescere,
Menti nec ægræ montibus aviis
  Prodest vagari, nec frementes
    In specula numerare fluctus.

Humana virtus non sibi sufficit;
Datur nec æquum cuique animum sibi
  Parare posse, utcunque jactet
    Grandiloquus nimis alta Zeno.

Exæstuantis pectoris impetum,
Rex summe, solus tu regis, arbiter;
  Mentisque, te tollente, fluctus;
    Te, resident, moderante fluctus.

Ode De Skia Insula

Permeo terras, ubi nuda rupes
Saxeas miscet nebulis ruinas,
Torva ubi rident steriles coloni
  Rura labores.

Pervagor gentes hominum ferorum,
Vita ubi nullo decorata cultu
Squallet informis, tugurique fumis
Fœda latescit.

Inter erroris salebrosa longi,
Inter ignotæ strepitus loquelæ,
Quot modis, mecum, quid agat, requiro,
Thralia dulcis?

Seu viri curas pia nupta mulcet,
Seu fovet mater sobolem benigna,
Sive cum libris novitate pascit
Sedula mentem.

Sit memor nostri, fideique solvat
Fida mercedem, meritoque blandum
Thraliæ discant resonare nomen
Littora Skiæ.

Spes

Apr. 16, 1783.

Hora sic peragit citata cursum;
Sic diem sequitur dies fugacem!
Spes novas nova lux parit, secunda
Spondens omnia credulis homullis;
Spes ludit stolidas, metuque cæco
Lux angit, miseros ludens homullos.

VERSUS COLLARI CAPRÆ DOMINI BANKS INSCRIBENDI

Perpetui, ambita bis terra, præmia lactis
Hæc habet, altrici capra secunda Jovis.

POEMATA

AD FŒMINAM QUANDAM GENEROSAM QUÆ LIBERTATIS CAUSÆ IN SERMONE PATROCINATA FUERAT

Liber ut esse velim, suasisti, pulchra Maria:
Ut maneam liber, pulchra Maria, vale,

Jactura Temporis

Hora perit furtim lætis, mens temporis ægra
Pigritiam incusat, nec minus hora perit.

Quas navis recipit, quantum sit pondus aquarum,
Dimidium tanti ponderis intret onus.

Quot vox missa pedes abit, horæ parte secunda?
Undecies centum denos quater adde duosque.

Εἰς ΒΙΡΧΙΟΝ[z].

Εἶδεν Ἀληθείη πρῴην χαίρουσα γράφοντα
Ἡρώων τε βίους Βίρχιον, ἠδὲ σοφῶν,
Καὶ βίου, εἶπεν, ὅταν ῥίψῃς θανάτοιο βέλεσσι,
Σοῦ ποτε γραφόμενον Βίρχιον ἄλλον ἔχοις.

Εἰς τὸ τῆς ΕΛΙΣΣΗΣ περὶ τῶν ὀνείρων αἴνιγμα[a].

Τῇ κάλλους δυνάμει τὶ τέλος; Ζεὺς πάντα δέδωκεν
Κύπριδι, μήδ' αὐτοῦ σκῆπτρα μέμηλε θεῷ.
Ἐκ Διός ἐστιν Ὄναρ, θεῖός ποτ' ἔγραψεν Ὅμηρος,
Ἀλλὰ τόδ' εἰς θνητοὺς Κύπρις ἔπεμψεν ὄναρ·
Ζεῦς μοῦνος φλογόεντι πόλεις ἔκπερσε κεραυνῷ,
Ὄμμασι λαμπρὰ Διὸς Κύπρις ὄϊστὰ φέρει.

[z] The rev. Dr. Thomas Birch, author of the History of the Royal Society, and other works of note.

[a] When Johnson had composed this Greek epigram to Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, he said, in a letter to Cave, "I think she ought to be celebrated in as many different languages as Louis le grand." His admiration of her learning was so great, that when he wished to praise the acquire-

POEMATA

IN ELIZÆ ENIGMA

Quis formæ modus imperio? Venus arrogat audax
Omnia, nec curæ sunt sua sceptra Jovi.
Ab Jove, Mæonides descendere somnia narrat:
Hæc veniunt Cypriæ somnia missa Deæ.
Jupiter unus erat, qui stravit fulmine gentes;
Nunc armant Veneris lumina tela Jovis.

[b] O! qui benignus crimina ignoscis, pater.
Facilisque semper confitenti ades reo,
Aurem faventem precibus O! præbe meis;
Scelerum catena me laborantem grave
Æterna tandem liberet clementia,
Ut summa laus sit, summa Christo gloria.

Per vitæ tenebras rerumque incerta vagantem
Numine præsenti me tueare, pater!
Me ducat lux sancta, Deus, lux sancta sequatur:
Usque regat gressus gratia fida meos.
Sic peragam tua jussa libens, accinctus ad omne
Mandatum vivam, sic moriarque tibi.

Me, pater omnipotens, de puro respice cœlo,
Quem mœstum et timidum crimina dira gravant;
Da veniam pacemque mihi, da, mente serena,
Ut tibi quæ placeant, omnia promptus agam.

ments of any one excessively, he remarked that, he knew as much Greek almost as Mrs. Carter. The verses in Elizæ Ænigma are addressed to the same excellent and accomplished lady. It is now nearly an insult to add, that she translated Epictetus, and contributed Nos. 44 and 100, to the Rambler. See Boswell, i. iii. and iv. and preface to Rambler, ii.—Ed.

[b] This and the three following articles are metrical versions of collects in the liturgy; the first, of that, beginning, "O God, whose nature and property;" the second and third of the collects for the seventeenth and twenty-first Sundays after Trinity; and the fourth, of the first collect in the communion service.

Solvi, quo Christus cunctis delicta redemit,
Et pro me pretium, tu patiare, pater.

[Dec. 5, 1784[c].]

Summe Deus, cui cæca patent penetralia cordis;
Quem nulla anxietas, nulla cupido fugit;
Quem nil vafrities peccantum subdola celat;
Omnia qui spectans, omnia ubique regis;
Mentibus afflatu terrenas ejice sordes
Divino, sanctus regnet ut intus amor:
Eloquiumque potens linguis torpentibus affer,
Ut tibi laus omni semper ab ore sonet:
Sanguine quo gentes, quo secula cuncta piavit,
Hæc nobis Christus promeruisse velit!

Psalmus CXVII

Anni qua volucris ducitur orbita,
Patrem cœlicolum perpetuo colunt
Quovis sanguine cretæ
Gentes undique carmine.

Patrem, cujus amor blandior in dies
Mortales miseros servat, alit, fovet,
Omnes undique gentes,
Sancto dicite carmine.

[d] Seu te sæva fames, levitas sive improba fecit,
Musca, meæ comitem, participemque dapis,

[c] The day on which he received the sacrament for the last time; and eight days before his decease.

[d] The above is a version of the song, "Busy, curious, thirsty fly."

Pone metum, rostrum fidens immitte culullo,
Nam licet, et toto prolue læta mero.
Tu, quamcunque tibi velox indulserit annus,
Carpe diem; fugit, heu, non revocanda dies!
Quæ nos blanda comes, quæ nos perducat eodem,
Volvitur hora mihi, volvitur hora tibi!
Una quidem, sic fata volunt, tibi vivitur æstas,
Eheu, quid decies plus mihi sexta dedit!
Olim præteritæ numeranti tempora vitæ,
Sexaginta annis non minor unus erit.

[e]HABEO, dedi quod alteri;
Habuique, quod dedi mihi;
Sed quod reliqui, perdidi.

[f]E WALTONI PISCATORE PERFECTO EXCERPTUM

NUNC, per gramina fusi,
Densa fronde salicti,

[e] These lines are a version of three sentences that are said, in the manuscript, to be "On the monument of John of Doncaster;" and which are as follows:

What I gave, that I have;
What I spent, that I had;
What I left, that I lost.

[f] These lines are a translation of part of a song in the Complete Angler of Isaac Walton, written by John Chalkhill, a friend of Spenser, and a good poet in his time. They are but part of the last stanza, which, that the reader may have it entire, is here given at length:

If the sun's excessive heat
Make our bodies swelter,
To an osier hedge we get
For a friendly shelter!
Where in a dike,
Perch or pike,
Roach or dace,
We do chase,
Bleak or gudgeon,

Dum defenditur imber,
Molles ducimus horas.
Hic, dum debita morti
Paulum vita moratur,
Nunc rescire priora,
Nunc instare futuris,
Nunc summi prece sancta
Patris numen adire est.
Quicquid quæritur ultra,
Cæco ducit amore,
Vel spe ludit inani,
Luctus mox pariturum.

[g]QUISQUIS iter tendis, vitreas qua lucidus undas
Speluncæ late Thamesis prætendit opacæ;
Marmorea trepidant qua lentæ in fornice guttæ,
Crystallisque latex fractus scintillat acutis;
Gemmaque, luxuriæ nondum famulata nitenti
Splendit, et incoquitur tectum sine fraude metallum;
Ingredere O! rerum pura cole mente parentem;
Auriferasque auri metuens scrutare cavernas.

Without grudging,
We are still contented.
Or we sometimes pass an hour
Under a green willow,
That defends us from a shower,
Making earth our pillow;
Where we may
Think and pray,
Before death
Stops our breath:
Other joys
Are but toys,
And to be lamented.

[g] The above lines are a version of Pope's verses on his own grotto, which begin,

"Thou, who shalt stop where Thames' translucent wave."

Ingredere! Egeriæ sacrum en tibi panditur antrum!
Hic, in se totum, longe per opaca futuri
Temporis, Henricum rapuit vis vivida mentis:
Hic pia Vindamius traxit suspiria, in ipsa
Morte memor patriæ; hic Marmonti pectore prima
Cœlestis fido caluerunt semina flammæ.
Temnere opes, pretium sceleris, patriamque tueri
Fortis, ades; tibi, sponte, patet venerabile limen.

Græcorum Epigrammatum Versiones Metricæ

Pag. 2. Brodæi edit. Bas. ann. 1549.

Non Argos pugilem, non me Messana creavit;
Patria Sparta mihi est, patria clara virum.
Arte valent isti, mihi robo revivere solo est,
Convenit ut natis, inclyta Sparta, tuis.

Br. 2.

Quandoquidem passim nulla ratione feruntur,
Cuncta cinis, cuncta et ludicra, cuncta nihil.

Br. 5.

Pectore qui duro, crudos de vite racemos,
Venturi exsecuit vascula prima meri,
Labraque constrictus, semesos, jamque terendos
Sub pedibus, populo prætereunte, jacit.
Supplicium huic, quoniam crescentia gaudia læsit,
Det Bacchus, dederat quale, Lycurge, tibi.
Hæ poterant uvæ læto convivia cantu
Mulcere, aut pectus triste levare malis.

Br. 8.

Fert humeris claudum validis per compita cæcus,
Hic oculos socio commodat, ille pedes.

Br. 10.

Qui, mutare vias ausus terræque marisque,
Trajecit montes nauta, fretumque pedes,
Xerxi, tercentum Spartæ Mars obstitit acris
Militibus; terris sit pelagoque pudor!

Br. 11.

Sit tibi, Calliope, Parnassum, cura, tenenti,
Alter ut adsit Homerus, adest etenim alter Achilles.

Br. 18.

Ad musas Venus hæc: Veneri parete, puellæ,
In vos ne missus spicula tendat amor.
Hæc musæ ad Venerem: sic Marti, diva, mineris,
Huc nunquam volitat debilis iste puer.

Br. 19.

Prospera sors nec te strepitoso turbine tollat,
Nec menti injiciat sordida cura jugum;
Nam vita incertis incerta impellitur auris,
Omnesque in partes tracta, retracta fluit;
Firma manet virtus; virtuti innitere, tutus
Per fluctus vitæ sic tibi cursus erit.

Br. 24.

Hora bonis quasi nunc instet suprema fruaris,
Plura ut victurus secula, parce bonis:
Divitiis, utrinque cavens, qui tempore parcit,
Tempore divitiis utitur, ille sapit.

Br. 24.

Nunquam jugera messibus onusta, aut
Quos Gyges cumulos habebat auri;
Quod vitæ satis est, peto, Macrine,
Mi, nequid nimis, est nimis probatum.

Br. 24.

Non opto aut precibus posco ditescere, paucis
Sit contenta mihi vita, dolore carens.

Br. 24.

Recta ad pauperiem tendit, cui corpora cordi est
Multa alere, et multas ædificare domos.

Br. 24.

Tu neque dulce putes alienæ accumbere mensæ;
Nec probrosa avidæ grata sit offa gulæ;
Nec ficto fletu, fictis solvere cachinnis,
Arridens domino, collacrymansque tuo;
Lætior haud tecum, tecum neque tristior unquam,
Sed Miliæ ridens, atque dolens Miliæ.

Br. 26.

Nil non mortale est mortalibus; omne quod est hic
Prætereunt, aut hos præterit omne bonum.

Br. 26.

Democrite, invisas homines majore cachinno;
Plus tibi ridendum secula nostra dabunt.
Heraclite, fluat lacrymarum crebrior imber;
Vita hominum nunc plus quod misereris habet.
Interea dubito; tecum me causa nec ulla
Ridere, aut tecum me lacrymare jubet.

Br. 26.

Elige iter vitæ, ut possis: rixisque, dolisque,
Perstrepit omne forum; cura molesta domi est;
Rura labor lassat; mare mille pericula terrent;
Verte solum, fient causa timoris opes;
Paupertas misera est; multæ, cum conjuge, lites
Tecta ineunt; cœlebs omnia solus ages.

Proles aucta gravat, rapta orbat; cæca juventæ est
Virtus; canities cauta vigore caret.
Ergo optent homines, aut nunquam in luminis oras
Venisse, aut visa luce repente mori.

Elige iter vitæ, ut mavis: prudentia, lausque,
Permeat omne forum; vita quieta domi est;
Rus ornat natura; levat maris aspera lucrum,
Verte solum, donat plena crumena decus;
Pauperies latitat; cum conjuge, gaudia multa
Tecta ineunt; cœlebs impediere minus;
Mulcet amor prolis, sopor est sine prole profundus;
Præcellit juvenis vi, pietate senex.
Nemo optet, nunquam venisse in luminis oras,
Aut periisse; scatet vita benigna bonis.

Br. 27.

Vita omnis scena est ludusque: aut ludere disce
Seria seponens, aut mala dura pati.

Br. 27.

Quæ, sine morte, fuga est vitæ, quam turba malorum
Non vitanda gravem, non toleranda facit?
Dulcia dat natura quidem, mare, sidera, terras,
Lunaque quas, et sol, itque reditque vias.
Terror inest aliis, mœrorque, et siquid habebis,
Forte, boni, ultrices experiere vices.

Br. 27.

Terram adii nudus, de terra nudus abibo.
Quid labor efficiet? non, nisi nudus, ero.

Br. 27.

Natus eram lacrymans, lacrymans e luce recedo:
Sunt quibus a lacrymis vix vacat ulla dies.

Tale hominum genus est, infirmum, triste, misellum,
Quod mors in cineres solvit, et abdit humo.

Br. 29.

Quisquis adit lectos, elata uxore, secundos,
Naufragus iratas ille retentat aquas.

Br. 30.

Fœlix ante alios nullius debitor æris;
Hunc sequitur cœlebs; tertius, orbe, venis.
Nec malē res cessit, subito si funere sponsam,
Didatus magna dote, recondis humo.
His sapiens lectis, Epicurum quærere frustra
Quales sint monades, qua fit inane, sinas.

Br. 31.

Optarit quicunque senex sibi longius ævum,
Dignus, qui multa in lustra senescat, erit.
Cum procul est, optat, cum venit, quisque senectam,
Incusat, semper spe meliora videt.

Br. 46.

Omnis vita nimis brevis est felicibus, una
Nox miseris longi temporis instar habet.

Br. 55.

Gratia ter grata est velox, sin forte moretur,
Gratia vix restat nomine digna suo.

Br. 56.

Seu prece poscatur, seu non, da, Jupiter, omne,
Magne, bonum; omne malum, et poscentibus, abnue nobis.

Br. 60.

Me, cane vitato, canis excipit alter; eodem
In me animo tellus gignit et unda feras,
Nec mirum; restat lepori conscendere cœlum,
Sidereus tamen hic territat, ecce canis!

Br. 70.

Telluri arboribus ver frondens, sidera cœlo,
Græciæ et urbs, urbi est ista propago, decus.

Br. 75.

Impia facta patrans, homines fortasse latebis,
Non poteris, meditans prava, latere deos.

Br. 75.

Antiope satyrum, Danæ aurum, Europa juvencum,
Et cycnum fecit Læda petita, Jovem.

Br. 92.

Ævi sat novi quam sim brevis; astra tuenti,
Per certas; stabili lege, voluta vices,
Tangitur haud pedibus tellus: conviva deorum
Expleor ambrosiis, exhilarorque cibis.

Br. 96.

Quod nimium est sit ineptum, hinc, ut dixere priores,
Et melli nimio fellis amaror inest.

Br. 103.

Puppe gubernatrix sedisti, audacia, prima
Divitiis acuens aspera corda virum;
Sola rates struis infidas, et dulcis amorem
Lucri ulciscendum mox nece sola doces,
Aurea secla hominum, quorum spectandus ocellis
E longinquo itidem pontus et orcus erat.

Br. 126.

Ditescis, credo, quid restat? quicquid habebis
In tumulum tecum, morte jubente, trahes?
Divitias cumulas, pereuntes negligis horas;
Incrementa ævi non cumulare potes.

Br. 126.

Mater adulantum, prolesque, pecunia, curæ,
Teque frui timor est, teque carere dolor.

Br. 126.

Me miserum sors omnis habet; florentibus annis,
Pauper eram, nummis diffluit arca senis;
Queis uti poteram quondam, fortuna negavit,
Queis uti nequeo, nunc mihi præbet, opes.

Br. 127.

Mnemosyne, ut Sappho, mellita voce, canentem
Audiit, irata est, ne nova musa foret.

Br. 152.

Cum tacet indoctus, sapientior esse videtur,
Et morbus tegitur, dum premit ora pudor.

Br. 155.

Nunc huic, nunc aliis cedens, cui farra Menippus
Credit, Achæmenidæ nuper agellus eram.
Quod nulli proprium versat fortuna, putabat
Ille suum stolidus, nunc putat ille suum.

Br. 156.

Non fortuna sibi te gratum tollit in altum;
At docet, exemplo, vis sibi quanta, tuo.

Br. 162.

Hic, aurum ut reperit, laqueum abjicit; alter ut aurum
Non reperit, nectit quem reperit, laqueum.

Br. 167.

Vive tuo ex animo: vario rumore loquetur
De te plebs audax, hic bene, et ille male.

Br. 168.

Vitæ rosa brevis est; properans si carpere nolis,
Quærenti obveniet mox sine flore rubus.

Br. 170.

Pulicibus morsus, restincta lampade, stultus
Exclamat: nunc me cernere desinitis.

Br. 202.

Menodotum pinxit Diodorus, et exit imago,
Præter Menodotum, nullius absimilis.

Br. 205.

Haud lavit Phido, haud tetigit, mihi febre calenti
In mentem ut venit nominis, interii.

Br. 210.

Nycticorax cantat lethale; sed ipsa, canenti
Demophilo auscultans, Nycticorax moritur.

Br. 212.

Hermem deorum nuncium, pennis levem,
Quo rege gaudent Arcades, furem boum,
Hujus palestræ qui vigil custos stetit,
Clam nocte tollit Aulus, et ridens ait:
Præstat magistro sæpe discipulus suo.

Br. 223.

Qui jacet hic servus vixit: nunc, lumine cassus,
Dario magno non minus ille potest.

Br. 227.

Funus Alexandri mentitur fama; fidesque
Si Phœbo, victor nescit obire diem.

Br. 241.

Nauta, quis hoc jaceat, ne percontere, sepulchro,
Eveniat tantum mitior unda tibi!

Br. 256.

Cur opulentus eges? tua cuncta in fœnore ponis:
Sic aliis dives, tu tibi pauper agis.

Br. 262.

Qui pascis barbam, si crescis mente, Platoni,
Hirce, parem nitido te tua barba facit.

Br. 266.

Clarus Ioannes, reginæ affinis, ab alto
Sanguine Anastasii; cuncta sepulta jacent:
Et pius, et recti cultor: non illa jacere
Dicam; stat virtus non subigenda neci.

Br. 267.

Cunctiparens tellus, salve, levis esto pusillo
Lysigeni, fuerat non gravis ille tibi.

Br. 285.

Naufragus hic jaceo; contra, jacet ecce colonus!
Idem orcus terræ, sic, pelagoque subest.

Br. 301.

Quid salvere jubes me, pessime! Corripe gressus;
Est mihi quad non te rideo, plena salus.

Br. 304.

Et ferus est Timon sub terris; janitor orci,
Cerbere, te morsu ne petat ille, cave.

Br. 307.

Vitam a terdecimo sextus mihi finiet annus,
Astra mathematicos si modo vera docent.
Sufficit hoc votis, flos hic pulcherrimus ævi est,
Et senium triplex Nestoris urna capit.

Br. 322.

Zosima, quæ solo fuit olim corpore serva,
Corpore nunc etiam libera facta fuit.

Br. 326.

Exiguum en! Priami monumentum; haud ille meretur
Quale, sed hostiles, quale dedere manus.

Br. 326.

Hector dat gladium Ajaci, dat balteum et Ajax
Hectori, et exitio munus utrique fuit.

Br. 344.

Ut vis, ponte minax, modo tres discesseris ulnas
Ingemina fluctus, ingeminaque sonum.

Br. 344.

Naufragus hic jaceo, fidens tamen utere velis;
Tutum aliis æquor, me pereunte, fuit.

Br. 398.

Heraclitus ego; indoctæ ne lædite linguæ
Subtile ingenium, quæro, capaxque mei;

Unus homo mihi pro sexcentis, turba popelli
Pro nullo, clamo nunc tumulatus idem.

Br. 399.

Ambraciota, vale lux alma, Cleombrotus infit,
Et saltu e muro ditis opaca petit:
Triste nihil passus, animi at de sorte Platonis
Scripta legens, sola vivere mente cupit.

Br. 399.

Servus, Epictetus, mutilato corpore, vixi,
Pauperieque Irus, curaque summadeum.

Br. 445.

Unde hic Praxiteles? nudam vidistis, Adoni,
Et Pari, et Anchisa, non alius, Venerem.

Br. 451.

Sufflato accendis quisquis carbone lucernam,
Corde meo accendens; ardeo totus ego.

Br. 486.

Jupiter hoc templum, ut, siquando relinquit Olympum,
Atthide non alius desit Olympus, habet.

Br. 487.

Civis et externus grati; domus hospita nescit
Quærere, quis, cujus, quis pater, unde venis.

Pompeii

Br. 487.

Cum fugere haud possit, fractis victoria pennis
Te manet, imperii, Roma, perenne decus.

Br. 488.

Latrones, alibi locupletum quærite tecta,
Assidet huic, custos, strenua pauperies.

Fortunæ malim adversæ tolerare procellas;
Quam domini ingentis ferre supercilium.

En, Sexto, Sexti meditatur imago, silente;
Orator, statua est, statuæque orator imago.

Pulchra est virginitas intacta, at vita periret,
Omnes si vellent virginitate frui;
Nequitiam fugiens, servata contrahe lege
Conjugium, ut pro te des hominem patriæ.

Fert humeris, venerabile onus, Cythereius heros
Per Trojæ flammas, densaque tela, patrem:
Clamat et Argivis, vetuli, ne tangite; vita
Exiguum est Marti, sed mihi grande, lucrum.

Forma animos hominum capit, at, si gratia desit,
Non tenet; esca natat pulchra, sed hamus abest.

Cogitat aut loquitur nil vir, nil cogitat uxor,
Felici thalamo non, puto, rixa strepit.

Buccina disjecit Thebarum mœnia, struxit
Quæ lyra, quam sibi non concinit harmonia!

Mente senes olim juvenis, Faustine, premebas,
Nunc juvenum terres robore corda senex.

Lævum at utrumque decus, juveni quod præbuit olim
Turba senum, juvenes nunc tribuere seni.

Exceptæ hospitio, musæ tribuere libellos
Herodoto, hospitii præmia, quæque suum.

Stella mea, observans stellas, dii me æthera faxint
Multis ut te oculis sim potis aspicere.

Clara Cheroneæ soboles, Plutarche, dicavit
Hanc statuam ingenio, Roma benigna, tuo.
Das bene collatos, quos Roma et Græcia jactat,
Ad divos, paribus passibus, ire duces;
Sed similem, Plutarche, tuæ describere vitam
Non poteras, regio non tulit ulla parem.

Dat tibi Pythagoram pictor; quod ni ipse tacere
Pythagoras mallet, vocem habuisset opus.

Prolem Hippi, et sua qua meliorem secula nullum
Videre, Archidicen, hæc tumulavit humus;
Quam, regum sobolem, nuptam, matrem, atque sororem
Fecerunt nulli sors titulique gravem.

Cecropidis gravis hic ponor, Martique dicatus,
Quo tua signantur gesta, Philippe, lapis.
Spreta jacet Marathon, jacet et Salaminia laurus,
Omnia dum Macedum gloria et arma premunt.
Sint Demosthenica ut jurata cadavera voce,
Stabo illis qui sunt, quique fuere, gravis.

Floribus in pratis, legi quos ipse, coronam
Contextam variis, do, Rhodoclea, tibi:

Hic anemone humet, confert narcissus odores
Cum violis; spirant lilia mista rosis.
His redimita comas, mores depone superbos,
Hæc peritura nitent; tu peritura nites!

Murem Asclepiades sub tecto ut vidit avarus,
Quid tibi, mus, mecum, dixit, amice, tibi?
Mus blandum ridens, respondit, pelle timorem;
Hic, bone vir, sedem, non alimenta, peto.

Sæpe tuum in tumulum lacrymarum decidit imber,
Quem fundit blando junctus amore dolor;
Charus enim cunctis, tanquam, dum vita manebat,
Cuique esses natus, cuique sodalis, eras.
Heu quam dura preces sprevit, quam surda querelas
Parca, juventutem non miserata tuam!

Arti ignis lucem tribui, tamen artis et ignis
Nunc ope, supplicii vivit imago mei.
Gratia nulla hominum mentes tenet, ista Promethei
Munera muneribus, si retulere fabri.

Illa triumphatrix Graium consueta procorum
Ante suas agmen Lais habere fores,
Hoc Veneri speculum; nolo me cernere qualis
Sum nunc, nec possum cernere qualis eram.

Cretheida fabellas dulces garrire peritam
Prosequitur lacrymis filia mœsta Sami:
Blandam lanifici sociam sine fine loquacem,
Quam tenet hic, cunctas quæ manet, alta quies.

Dicite, Causidici, gelido nunc marmore magni
Mugitum tumulus comprimit Amphiloci.

Si forsan tumulum quo conditur Eumarus aufers,
Nil lucri facies; ossa habet et cinerem.

EPICTETI

Me, rex deorum, tuque, duc, necessitas,
Quo, lege vestra, vita me feret mea.
Sequar libenter, sin reluctari velim,
Fiam scelestus, nec tamen minus sequar.

E. THEOCRITO

Poeta, lector, hic quiescit Hipponax,
Si sis scelestus, præteri, procul, marmor:
At te bonum si noris, et bonis natum,
Tutum hic sedile, et si placet, sopor tutus.

EUR. MED. 193—203

Non immerito culpanda venit
Proavum vecors insipientia,
Qui convivia, lautasque dapes,
Hilarare suis jussere modis
Cantum, vitæ dulce levamen.
At nemo feras iras hominum
Domibus claris exitiales,
Voce aut fidibus pellere docuit;
Queis tamen aptam ferre medelam
Utile cunctis hoc opus esset;
Namque, ubi mensas onerant epulæ,
Quorsum dulcis luxuria soni?
Sat lætitia sine subsidiis,
Pectora molli mulcet dubiæ
Copia cœnæ.
320

Τοῖος Ἄρης Βροτολοιγὸς ἐνὶ πτολέμοισι μέμηνε,
Καὶ τοῖος Παφίην πλῆξεν ἔρωτι θεάν.

The above is a version of a Latin epigram on the famous John duke of Marlborough, by the abbé Salvini, which is as follows:

Haud alio vultu fremuit Mars acer in armis:
Haud alio Cypriam percutit ore deam.

The duke was, it seems, remarkably handsome in his person, to which the second line has reference.

Septem Ætates

Prima parit terras ætas; siccatque secunda;
Evocat Abramum dein tertia; quarta relinquit
Ægyptum; templo Solomonis quinta supersit;
Cyrum sexta timet; lætatur septima Christo.
[h]His Tempelmanni numeris descripseris orbem,
[i]Cum sex centuriis Judæo millia septem.
Myrias[j] Ægypto cessit bis septima pingui.
Imperium qua Turca[k] ferox exercet iniquum.

[h] To the above lines, (which are unfinished, and can, therefore, be only offered as a fragment,) in the doctor's manuscript, are prefixed the words "Geographia Metrica." As we are referred, in the first of the verses, to Templeman, for having furnished the numerical computations that are the subject of them, his work has been, accordingly, consulted, the title of which is, a new Survey of the Globe; and which professes to give an accurate mensuration of all the empires, kingdoms, and other divisions thereof, in the square miles that they respectively contain. On comparison of the several numbers in these verses, with those set down by Templeman, it appears that nearly half of them are precisely the same; the rest are not quite so exactly done.— For the convenience of the reader, it has been thought right to subjoin each number, as it stands in Templeman's works, to that in Dr. Johnson's verses which refers to it.

[i] In this first article that is versified, there is an accurate conformity in Dr. Johnson's number to Templeman's; who sets down the square miles of Palestine at 7,600.

[j] The square miles of Egypt are, in Templeman, 140,700.

[k] The whole Turkish empire, in Templeman, is computed at 960,057 square miles.

Undecies binas necadas et millia septem
Sortitur[l] Pelopis tellus quæ nomine gaudet.
Myriadas decies septem numerare jubebit
Pastor Arabs: decies octo sibi Persa requirit.
Myriades sibi pulchra duas, duo millia poscit
Parthenope. [m]Novies vult tellus mille Sicana.
[n]Papa suo regit imperio ter millia quinque.
Cum sex centuriis numerat sex millia Tuscus[o].
Centuria Ligures[p] augent duo millia quarta.
Centuriæ octavam decadem addit Lucca[q] secundæ.
Ut dicas, spatiis quam latis imperet orbi
[r]Russia, myriadas ter denas adde trecentis.
[s]Sardiniam cum sexcentis sex millia complent.
Cum sexagenis, dum plura recluserit ætas,
Myriadas ter mille homini dat terra[t] colendas.
Vult sibi vicenas millesima myrias addi,
Vicenis quinas, Asiam[u] metata celebrem.
Se quinquagenis octingentesima jungit
Myrias, ut menti pateat tota Africa[v] doctæ.

[l] In the four following articles, the numbers in Templeman and in Johnson's verses are alike.—We find, accordingly, the Morea, in Templeman, to be set down at 7,220 square miles.— Arabia, at 700,000.— Persia, 800,000.— and Naples, at 22,000.

[m] Sicily, in Templeman, is put down at 9,400.

[n] The pope's dominions, at 14,868.

[o] Tuscany, at 6,640.

[p] Genoa, in Templeman, as in Johnson likewise, is set down at 2,400.

[q] Lucca, at 286.

[r] The Russian empire, in the 29th plate of Templeman, is set down at 3,303,485 square miles.

[s] Sardinia, in Templeman, as likewise in Johnson, 6,600.

[t] The habitable world, in Templeman, is computed, in square miles, at 30,666,806 square miles.

[u] Asia, at 10,257,487.

[v] Africa, at 8,506,208.

Myriadas septem decies Europa[w] ducentis
Et quadragenis quoque ter tria millia jungit.
Myriadas denas dat, quinque et millia, sexque
Centurias, et tres decades Europa Britannis[x].
Ter tria myriadi conjungit millia quartæ,
Centuriæ quartæ decades quinque[y] Anglia nectit.
Millia myriadi septem fœcunda secundæ
Et quadragenis decades quinque addit Ierne[z].
Quingentis quadragenis socialis adauget
Millia Belga[a] novem.
Ter sex centurias Hollandia jactat opima.
Undecimum Camber vult septem millibus addi.

* * * * *

TRANSLATION OF DRYDEN'S EPIGRAM ON MILTON

Quos laudat vates, Græcus, Romanus, et Anglus,
Tres tria temporibus secla dedere suis.
Sublime ingenium Græcus; Romanus habebat
Carmen grande sonans; Anglus utrumque tulit.
Nil majus natura capit: clarare priores
Quæ potuere duos tertius unus habet.

[w] Europe, at 2,749,349.

[x] The British dominions, at 105,634.

[y] England, as likewise in Johnson's expression of the number, at 49,450.

[z] Ireland, at 27,457.

[a] In the three remaining instances, which make the whole that Dr. Johnson appears to have rendered into Latin verse, we find the numbers exactly agreeing with those of Templeman, who makes the square miles of the United Provinces, 9,540 — of the province of Holland, 1,800 — and of Wales, 7,011.

POEMATA

EPILOGUE TO THE CARMEN SÆCULARE OF HORACE

PERFORMED AT FREEMASONS' HALL

Quæ fausta Romæ dixit Horatius,
Hæc fausta vobis dicimus, Angliæ
Opes, triumphos, et subacti
Imperium pelagi precantes.

Such strains as, mingled with the lyre,
Could Rome with future greatness fire,
Ye sons of England, deign to hear,
Nor think our wishes less sincere.
May ye the varied blessings share
Of plenteous peace and prosp'rous war;
And o'er the globe extend your reign,
Unbounded masters of the main!

TRANSLATION OF A WELSH EPITAPH (IN HERBERT'S TRAVELS) ON PRINCE MADOCK

Inclytus hic hæres magni requiescit Oeni,
Confessas tantum mente, manuque, patrem;
Servilem tuti cultum contempsit agelli,
Et petiit terras, per freta longa, novas.

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